BOY SCOUTS
BEYOND THE
ARCTIC CIRCLE

G. HARVEY RALPHSON

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OR THE LOST EXPEDITION

BY

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CHAPTER I

A SCOUT FROM CAPE FORBES

"If the season is going to be like this, we shall all wish we had left New York in April!"

"This is just a simmer! We'll be broiled and stewed before the summer is over."

"It is still spring, according to the calendar, but the calendar must be getting foolish!"

"Still beautiful May, but I'd like to take a bite out of the North Pole, just the same."

It really was an unseasonably hot night in the City of New York, and the atmosphere seemed hotter than it really was because the previous days had been cool.

Notwithstanding the comments recorded above, the room where the four boys sat was fairly comfortable. This was the clubroom of the Black Bear Patrol, Boy Scouts of America.

The room was at the top of the house, with

large windows facing to the south and west, and the air was fresh, with now and then a scent of green things growing in Central Park, which was not far away. Besides, there were electric fans in the apartment and in the broad corridor outside the open doorway.

The four boys in the clubroom are already well known to many of our readers. They were Ned Nestor and Jimmie McGraw, of the Wolf Patrol; and Frank Shaw and Jack Bosworth, of the Black Bear Patrol. The clubroom was in the residence of Jack's father, a leading attorney. Frank's father was a noted editor and newspaper owner. Ned Nestor, though under eighteen, was well known to his intimate friends as an employe of the Secret Service branch of the United States Government. Jimmie McGraw had, until a year or two previous to this night, been a newsboy, but he was now associated with Ned Nestor in his Secret Service work.

"Serves us good and right!" Frank Shaw, short, stout, blue-eyed and pleasing of features, was saying. "We ought to have gone to Labrador for the vacation. We had a chance, you know, fellows, for Harrry Stevens' father offered to build us a motor boat that would go through ice like a hot knife through butter! This smoth-

ering we are going to get serves us right for not going north."

Harry Stevens' father was a noted maker of automobiles, and had, the previous year, supplied the boys with a motor boat which had carried them safely to the headwaters of the Columbia river. Early in the week Harry had left for the Adirondacks, greatly disappointed because his chums had not accepted the offer of the Labrador trip and the boat.

Jack Bosworth, slender, dark, and inclined to look on the trouble side of life, turned from a window with a frown on his handsome face.

"If I had only known what kind of a fiery furnace New York would turn out to be," he said, "I would have voted for Labrador. Why, the motor boat was just about finished when we gave up the notion of going," he went on. "It seems as if we lack ordinary horse sense at times."

"You can't blame me," Jimmie McGraw declared. "I voted nine times for Labrador! I repeated until the Society for the Prevention of Large Majorities got me on the list! I'd walk if I could get within sight of an iceberg now! Come on, fellows!" he continued, "this talk of ice gives me a faint feeling! Come on over by the park, and I'll blow myself for the long, cold drinks! If we remain here we'll

melt and run down into the rooms below. And it is only May, at that!"

Ned Nestor, though usually grave and inclined to be dignified, was on his feet in a second. He was a sturdy lad, tall and heavy for his years, with brown hair and eyes and a complexion like that of a young girl, in which regard he differed materially from his special chum, Jimmie, who was red of hair and so freckled that his companions called him "Freckles" oftener than they called him anything else. Ned now seized Jimmie and pulled him toward the door.

"We'd better go before the little tramp changed his mind," Ned said. "Whenever Freckles suggests spending money on any one save himself, it is time to act! Come along, boys, I'm tasting that cool drink now!"

"Yes," grinned Jimmie, wiggling out of Ned's grasp, "I'm such a tightwad, and save so much money, that I never have a cent to the good!"

The boy did not wait for any response, but shot down the corridor, reached the elevator in advance of the others, and descended alone. He was not in sight when the others came to the pavement, but they kept on in the direction of a refreshment parlor which flashed hundreds of brilliant lights near the Central Park corner.

When they were about to enter they saw Jimmie coming out. He was accompanied by

a ragged boy of about his own age. The two were half running, with Jimmie's hand on the other's arm, and behind them, his broad face red with anger, came a waiter in white apron and jacket.

The waiter drew up at the wide entrance, and so did the boys, but only long enough to put their fingers to their noses and express their hostility and contempt for the waiter and the establishment by numerous gyrations of the fingers. In a moment a policeman came forward, and the lads darted away.

"Look at the little monkey!" Frank Shaw laughed. "What do you think he's found now? I presume he took that seedy lad in there and got the bounce! It is a crime in New York to mix rags with evening dress!"

With this sage remark Frank quickened his steps and soon came up with the two boys, who were still keeping an eye out for the policeman.

"What's the answer?" Frank asked, and Jimmie laughed, while his companion dropped his eyes to his shabby figure and tried to edge away.

When the other boys came up, Jimmie was obliged to hold tight to his friend to keep him from running off. Besides being ragged, the boy was distinctly in need of a bath.

"Who is your friend?" Ned finally asked, to

end a silence which was proving embarrassing. "And what did you make the get-away for?"

Jimmie laughed again and drew the boy forward, a proceeding to which the latter objected in vain.

"This is Sailor Green," he began. I've known him longer than I have any of you boys. We used to room together in a furnished goods box in an alley near Cherry hill. When it comes to being the straight goods, he's got George Washington and Benjamin Franklin backed off the dock. He's about starved, and they wouldn't serve him in there becuase his makeup is not classy. Now, fellows, we'll go an' eat!"

"It's rotten to mix you boys up in it," Sailor Green said, as the lads walked along. "I never thought of seeing Jimmie up here. I went in the joint to ask for a job, an' Jimmie saw the the stiff givin' me the bunk an' handed him one!"

"So you assaulted the waiter, did you?" asked Frank, trying to face Jimmie sternly. "You'll get pinched for that."

"I only hit him with a plate," Jimmie urged. "If you want to hurt one of them ginks you've got to use an axe."

Directly the boys came to a restaurant where they were well known and secured a private dining room. After the orders had been given

Jimmie swept a pair of laughing eyes around the circle of faces at the table and pointed to his new-found friend.

"He doesn't look much like a sailor, does he?" the boy asked.

Sailor Green blushed under the curious glances of the others, and Jimmie hastened to add:

"But he is, though. You couldn't keep the kid off the sea with a ball an' chain. He's been around the world, an' across the world, an' up an' down the world lengthwise! Everybody calls him Sailor Green, but the name is too big for him, and fits him like a catskin would fit a mouse. When you hear 'Sailor Green' said, you think of a man with whiskers an' a red handkerchief around his neck! What?"

The conversation stopped right there, for the soup was served, and Sailor Green was so unaffectedly hungry, and consumed his food with such evident relish, that the boys did not care to interfere with his enjoyment. Little was said until the coffee was on the table, and then Jimmie asked:

"Where have you been now, Sailor Green?"

"Up in Peabody bay and Smith sound," answered the boy, with an involuntary shiver.

"Smith's sound!" echoed Frank. "Not away up beyond Baffin bay?"

"That's the place!" was the unostentatious

reply. "It was good an' cold up there, too. Also they have bears as big as Trinity church."

"You must have been on a whaler," suggested Jack Bosworth.

"No," replied Sailor Green. "I don't know what the *Reindeer* went to Cape Forbes for. There's no whales to speak of in those waters, an' the seals have mostly been killed off. I don't know why she went."

"Why didn't you ask, then?" demanded Jimmie.

"I did," answered the boy, "an' what do you think they told me?" this was the first smile that had shown on the lad's face since the meeting with Jimmie at the refreshment parlor.

"What did they tell you?" asked Frank. "I presume they lied."

"They said they were going after a cargo of northern lights," answered Sailor Green, gravely. "So I, bein' only a cabin boy, an' not an able bodied seaman, never asked any more questions."

"I should think not!" roared Jimmie. "Go on an' tell us about it! You can't give us too much about Baffin bay or Smith sound on a night like this. An iceberg would be popular in here right now."

"Who was commander of the *Reindeer?*" asked Ned Nestor, running over a package of

papers which he had taken from his pocket. "And tell me, if you can, just how he looked, and if he had a couple of passengers on board—men who seemed to be important to the expedition, but who had no duties to perform. Tell me all you can about the commander."

The others regarded Ned curiously for a moment. The boy was eager and excited. Sailor Green undoubtedly had a strange story to tell, still they could not understand why Ned should be so wrapped up in it.

"The commander was Lieut. Reis," the boy answered. "He was tall, an' lean, with little black eyes an' a nose like a cut-water. He kicked the sailors around promiscuous. I guess that's why they blowed the ship up with dynamite. He—"

"Just a second," Ned interrupted. "There were two guests on board the *Reindeer*, and they lived in seclusion in the commander's cabin! One was very large, with a blonde beard and a heavy face, while the other was short and thin and dark, with a clean-shaven face and a long scar over the right eyebrow! The guests talked with the commander in a language no one on board understood, and the big man and the little man sometimes quarreled!"

Sailor Green drew his slender little figure back in his chair and looked at the speaker as

boys sometimes look at magicians who have just taken a flock of geese from a small vest pocket! The amazement of the other boys was not so openly expressed, but it was evident that they were wondering how their chum had gained his knowledge of the men who had sailed for the Arctic regions in the *Reindeer*.

"You've hit it!" Sailor Green admitted, after a second of hesitation. "There were two guests on board, an' they lived in the commander's quarters, an' one was big an' one was little, an' they talked in a gibberish no one save their own selves understood, an' they quarreled. Did some other party get saved an' come back an' tell you?"

"Get saved?" demanded Frank. "Why do you ask if some other party was saved. I'd like to know what there is about this, anyway," the boy added, turning to Ned. "What do you know about the *Reindeer* and her commander and his guests?"

Ned was bending over a map of the Arctic regions which he had spread out on the table in front of him, and did not reply. He traced with a pencil a line through Baffin bay to Northumberland island, on to Cape Alexander, to Peabody bay, and then to Lady Franklin bay, which is almost on the 82d degree of latitude, north.

"When did you leave Boston?" the boy then asked.

"Early in July, nearly a year ago," was the reply.

"And you got to Cape Forbes before the pack shut in on the coast of Greenland?" he continued, excitedly.

"Yes, and when the Arctic night set in we had a storehouse on the shore, and everything ready for the dark term, which extends from the middle of November to the middle of February."

"And you were going on in April or May—this May, probably."

"That is what the commander said."

"Where to?"

"To Lady Franklin bay, on the coast of Grinnell land."

"Mother of Moses!" exclaimed Jimmie, "what were you going there for?"

"You know what I told you!" grinned Sailor Green. "They told me they were going after a cargo of northern lights when I asked them!"

"What took place at Cape Forbes?" asked Ned, impatiently.

"The commander was killed, one day in February, last. I don't know how it happened, but there was a bullet wound in his head. Then the guests quarreled as to who should take command. The sailors found the stock of whiskey

and brandy and got spiflicated and one night the ship blew up while I was at the storehouse, and I was taken off by a belated Danish fishing vessel which had the unusual good luck to get past Cape Forbes and through Smith sound."

"And the others?" asked Ned, eagerly. "The guests and the crew?"

"So far as I know they're all dead!" was the calm reply.

CHAPTER II

AN ARCTIC TRIP PLANNED

"A whole crew of men, officers and sailors, wiped out, and only a cabin boy to tell the story!" exclaimed Jack.

"But you must remember that the cabin boy who was saved was Sailor Green!" commented Jimmie. "Sailor Green has more lives than a cat. If you should lose him in a desert he'd find a soda fountain every mile! How did it happen, Sailor?" he went on. "Tell us about it."

"And put in plenty of icebergs and glaciers!" pleaded Frank, drawing back from the table and throwing off his coat. "Did you see any real glaciers up there, Sailor Green?"

"Humboldt glacier lies all along the west coast of Greenland from 79 to 80, north," was the reply. "There is where the icebergs come from."

"And the ice pack, too," broke in Frank Shaw. "It is like this," he continued, clearing a little space on the table and drawing a map with the tine of a fork dipped in a glass of water. "Here is Greenland, and here, to the west, are Baffin

bay, Smith sound and Kennedy channel. Across the water is Grinnell land."

"And almost up to 82, north, is Lady Franklin bay," Sailor Green interrupted. "We were going there."

"Exactly," agreed Frank. "And over here, on the east shore of Greenland, is the Arctic current, coming down from the North Pole and bringing with it wood which drifts out of the rivers of Siberia. This current sweeps around the southern end of Greenland and up to or beyond Melville bay, where it turns west."

"That is what I learned on board the *Reindeer*," Sailor Green said.

"When it gets over to the coast of Grinnell land," Frank went on, "it encounters currents from Smith sound, Kennedy channel and Jones and Lancaster sounds, and so rushes south again, this time on the eastern coast of Grinnell land. So you see, fellows, that this makes a whirlpool of Baffin bay. The water swirls round and round it, and the ice which is thrown off by the glaciers goes round and round with it, from Melville bay to Cape Alexander. Sometimes the pack is a hundred feet high, and there are icebergs as large as Manhattan island!"

"The grinding of the ice sounds like the noises of a thousand Broadways all merged into one," compared Sailor Green.

"Now, think, Sailor Green," Ned broke in, folding up his map and papers, "and tell me, if you can, what the two guests of the commander quarreled about? Didn't you catch one word—not even one?"

"Just about one," Sailor Green replied. "They were always mentioning 'the cairn.' Besides that word, I only heard them speaking of Lady Franklin bay. I got a notion that the cairn was at Lady Franklin bay."

"What's a cairn?" asked Jimmie, his eyes shining.

"A heap of stones," answered Sailor Green. "They put dead folks under cairns, and they put food and letters they want those who follow on behind to find under cairns, too. We buried Commander Reis under a cairn at Cape Forbes."

"And what did you bury with him?" asked Ned.

"Nothing at all. The guests kept all the journals of the voyage and whatever they found in his cabin."

Ned excused himself, after a time, and left the room. He was gone at least two hours, and during that time Frank, Jack and Jimmie talked with Sailor Green about the perils and pleasures of Smith sound and the waste of waters beyond the Arctic circle. When Ned returned

he entered the room quietly and sat for some moments listening to them.

"I'd like to go up there!" Jimmie was saying. "We had a chance to go to Labrador, but threw it down, like the idiots we were."

"With a friendly crew it would be no end of fun," Frank suggested.

"It makes me sick to think of what we passed up!" Jack Bosworth put in. "It was the chance of a life time."

Presently a messenger entered and handed Ned a packet of telegrams. The boy opened the first one with an eagerness which promised something of importance to the boys who were watching his every movement.

"What's he got now?" Frank asked, in a low tone, as Ned buried his face in a telegram covering several sheets of paper. "We'll be doing something pretty soon now, boys! We get busy whenever Ned begins to talk by telegraph! What is it, old chap?" the boy added, clapping Ned on the shoulder and looking at a message over his arm.

Ned passed a telegram over to him and went on opening the envelopes which lay before him. Frank fairly rose in his shoes as he read the dispatch Ned had handed to him.

"Listen, boys!" he shouted. "There's something doing! This is from Harry Stevens, up

in the northern hills. I'll read it. 'Glad you've come to your senses! Will wire to have the *Arctic* completed at once. Look for me in the morning!' Now, what do you know about that?"

" 'Will wire to have the *Arctic* completed at once,' " repeated Jimmie. "I reckon I know what that means! We're going to Lady Franklin bay!"

Sailor Green sat looking at Ned questioningly. It was as if he feared to ask a question which was on his lips.

"Honest?" demanded Jack, facing Ned, "are we going?"

"I'm going, as soon as the *Arctic* can be completed and provisioned," Ned replied. "That is," he continued, "if I can induce Sailor Green to go along and show me where the *Reindeer* was blown up, and where the commander was buried."

Sailor Green sprang to his feet, all excitement, and began pounding Jimmie over the head with his napkin.

"Do you hear that, Freckles?" he shouted. "I'm invited! I'm going back to Peabody bay! And I suppose you're all going, too," he went on.

"Every last one of us," answered Jimmie. "We're going on a Boy Scout expedition to the

Arctic regions! And Harry Stevens will go too!"

Frank Shaw regarded Sailor Green with a comical smile.

"Have you got a picture of yourself?" he asked.

"Never had one," was the reply. "I never had one taken."

"What do you want of a picture of Sailor Green?" demanded Jimmie, who seemed to consider himself the temporary guardian of the waif, having discovered him. "No foolishness, now," he cautioned.

"Oh, never mind," Frank laughed. "I reckon Dad's got a man that can take a picture! You come with me, Sailor Green," the boy went on, "and I'll fix you up dandy, and get your picture in the paper. All you've got to do is to tell the story of the wrecking of the *Reindeer* and the murder of Lieut. Reis. That won't take long!"

Sailor glanced at Ned inquiringly, his face eager and anxious.

Ned drew Frank aside while the others gathered around the waif.

"Forget the newspaper end of it," Ned warned Frank, "unless you want to spoil the whole trip! It is absolutely necessary that we get away secretly. You may have the story written and the pictures taken, but not one word must be printed until after we pass Cape Farewell."

"Oh, what a shame!" wailed the son of the editor. "What a rotten shame! And that Danish whaler getting out at that unusual time! Just think, Ned, what a story it is! And exclusive, at that!"

"If the story is printed," Ned insisted, "we shall not go. There would be no use in going. I can't tell you why."

"Are we going to meet with opposition on the way?" asked Frank.

"I have no doubt of it," was the reply.

"But no one can catch us after we get under way in the *Arctic*," urged Frank. "She is as strong as an ocean-going tug, and can make forty miles an hour! I believe she will be able to cut through the pack ice in Kennedy channel and Smith sound!"

"Never mind the arguments," laughed Ned. "We are going to have plenty of trouble without warning all the enemies of the government that we are going north on the trail of the *Reindeer*."

"Enemies of the government?" repeated Frank. "Then this is another Secret Service job?"

"It certainly is," answered Ned.

"That makes it nice!" Frank grinned. "But why is the government sending us up to Cape Forbes and Lady Franklin bay?"

"We'll talk about that after we get out on salt water, my lad."

"Well, you can tell me this," insisted Frank, "especially if I promise to let this wonderful story get lost on the way to Dad's office, you can tell me what the *Arctic* is going after?"

"I shall have to answer you as the men of the lost *Reindeer* answered Sailor Green," Ned replied, "and tell you that we are going after a cargo of northern lights!"

"All right!" declared Frank. "I'll go telephone to Dad to send a couple of reporters and a photographer up here! You'll see the whole first page of Dad's paper filled with the story in the morning!"

"Then we don't go!" answered Ned. "I realize what a scoop it would be," he went on, "but the printing of the story would ruin our chance of success. Once let it be known that an expedition is about starting to discover the wreck of the *Reindeer*, and a half a dozen fleet tugs would start out of Boston harbor before tomorrow night."

"Gee!" Frank cried. "It must be important, our mission!"

"No Boy Scouts were ever trusted with a greater one."

"Then I'm as mum as an oyster!" Frank consented. "I'm the little boy that never learned

to talk! But, look here, chum, what has the Secret Service department of the United States government got to do with the wreck of the *Reindeer*, or the cairn where the body of Lieut. Reis was left? Tell me that and I'll quit asking questions."

"Wait until we get above the Arctic circle and I'll tell you."

"How soon are we going to get off?" asked Frank, determined to secure some sort of information concerning the trip.

Ned was thoughtful for a moment. In the other corner of the room Sailor Green was explaining the slow flow of Humboldt glacier to the other boys, who were listening eagerly.

"It advances about a foot a year," the boy was saying," and breaks off when it gets in deep water, and so icebergs are formed. Take a good, healthy iceberg that is three hundred feet above the ocean, and it is about two thousand feet under the water."

"We'll all be learning about icebergs and ice packs at first hand in a short time," Frank said, listening. "How long did you say it would be before we got away?"

"We ought to get away in three days. Harry Stevens will be down in the morning, and the work of finishing and provisioning the *Arctic* will

go on night and day. Yes, we ought to get away by Saturday."

"What do we take to eat?" asked Frank.

"Vegetables, principally, for we can get all the fresh meat we want after we pass Cape Farewell. Shall we take a couple of men along to help run the motor boat?"

"Why, there'll be Harry, and Jack, and Jimmie, and Sailor Green, and you and me! I don't see why we need more."

"We usually pick up Boy Scouts wherever we go," Ned laughed. "I wonder if we shall find one above the Circle?"

"Of course we shall," replied Frank. "Wherever you go in the world, you will find Boy Scouts! They are doing the work of men everywhere, too. Don't you remember how we found one in the Philippines, and one in China? We'll find some young chap who has drifted out of some of the rivers of Siberia and floated around Cape Farewell and up through Davis strait and Baffin bay to Smith sound! And when you find him, he'll be a Boy Scout, and don't you never forget it!"

The other boys now came clamoring about Ned, asking for information, but all were advised to go to bed. In the end Jimmie sent Sailor Green away with Frank, who promised to put him to bed at a near-by hotel, and then Ned

and his chum started for their home in Brooklyn, which, after all, is only the sleeping chamber of Greater New York.

The night was still decidedly warm for May, and the streets and parks were crowded with perspiring, ill-tempered humanity. Ned and Jimmie strolled slowly south for a long time, and then turned toward the East river, it being the plan to cross at the old Greenpoint ferry. They imagined that the river might contribute a breeze to the unseasonable night.

When they came, at last, after a long walk, under the lights of the ferry house Jimmie seized Ned's arm and drew him back from the ticket window, toward which he was moving.

"Just change your mind," the little fellow whispered, as they walked along, back to the pavement of the street. "Change your mind and see what that young man back there does."

"I can imagine what he'll do," Ned replied, "he'll change his mind, also, and we'll be playing hide-and-seek for an hour or more. We may as well go aboard and see what he is up to."

"You saw him, too, then?" asked the little fellow.

"Yes; he was at the restaurant. He must have followed us there. I don't know why, unless he was tracking Sailor Green."

"Then he's been watching us ever since we

left the eatery?" asked Jimmie. "I never saw him until now."

"He has been our constant companion," laughed Ned. "What do you think I took this long, slow walk for? Not for exercise on a night like this. I've been watching that fellow all the way down!"

"If he was trailing Sailor Green," Jimmie commented, "he would have followed him to the hotel where Frank took him."

"Perhaps not," Ned replied. "See! There's our man now, and he's busy with three as tough looking chaps as I ever saw! We ought to have boarded the ferry, I guess. I'm afraid they mean to make us trouble."

CHAPTER III

INDIAN SIGNS IN NEW YORK!

"Have you got a gun with you?" asked Jimmie, as the toughs came closer and stopped between Ned and Jimmie and the entrance to the ferry house. "We ought to give 'em a bump for their impudence!"

"I never carry one in cities supposed to be civilized," Ned answered.

As the boys approached, the toughs gathered in a little group in the middle of the pavement. Jimmie was about to bunt into them when Ned caught him by the shoulder and drew him away. It was the latter's intention in doing this to pass around the fellows, and so avoid an encounter if it was possible to do so.

This plan which, according to Jimmie, savored a little of humiliation, was not carried out, however, for as Ned stepped from the pavement one of the toughs moved toward him and held out his hand. Jimmie almost dropped from sheer amazement when he saw Ned take the proffered hand in greeting and open up a conversation with the young man.

"That's a trick!" the little fellow concluded, as the toughs walked toward Ned and himself.

We'll be getting a wallop on the coco pretty soon if we don't get out of this!"

But there seemed to be no hostility on the part of the toughs now. The one who had followed the boys from the vicinity of the park slunk away, and Ned called the little fellow to his side.

"This," Ned explained, "is Mud Haley! You've heard me speak of Mud? And these are his friends. Boys, this is Jimmie McGraw!"

"I've heard of you, Jimmie!" Mud Haley said, extending a hard and dirty hand to the boy. "You're me frien' f'm now on. Anything Ned says goes wit' us! Eb, bos?"

"Sure it goes!" the others answered.

"Ned got me sprung w'en the harness bull giv' me th' pinch!" Mud explained to Jimmie, who had no difficulty at all in understanding that the young man meant to say that Ned had secured his release when a patrolman in uniform had arrested him.

"Ned's as square as they're made," Jimmie contributed.

"S-a-y!" Mud went on. "T'at guy wit' th' foxy nut giv' me th' office t' batter Ned! What? I'll cave 'is roof in w'en I get 'im right!"

"What did he want you to do that for?" asked Ned. "What did he say to you?"

"He giv it to me straight t'at you'd got to be beat up!"

The boys talked with the toughs for some moments, until Ned and Jimmie understood that the man who had followed them from the upper part of the city had hired Mud and his friends to attack them and beat them into insensibility. This program would undoubtedly have been carried out only for the fact that Ned had at one time befriended Mud Haley.

"Did he pay you for the job?" asked Ned, with a smile.

"Giv' me a ten-spot," was the reply, "an' we're goin' to change th' tide in Eas' river wit' it! What?"

"Well," laughed Jimmie, "if you boys can't be good, you can be careful! Don't get t'run in!"

Before leaving Mud and his friends, Ned asked them to locate the young man who had employed them, and to keep him posted as to his movements. The tough promised to do so, and, in fact, seemed rather proud of his commission. He was a typical East Side tough, but Ned had once done him a favor, and so he could be depended on.

The tough and gunman of lower New York lives in an atmosphere of deceit and treachery. He never knows when his most intimate acquaintance — he has no "friends"—will hand him over to the police. One result of this situ-

ation is that whenever he finds an unselfish friend in the ranks of the respectably employed he attaches himself to him with the tenacity and the loyalty of a watchdog.

"Do you think Mud Haley will spot that fellow?" asked Jimmie, as the lads stepped a-board the ferry. "He seems to be all to the good."

"He is a hard citizen," Ned replied, "but he will keep his word with me. Men of his sort are so seldom treated with open honesty that they take very kindly to those who trust them."

Just as the ferry was leaving the floating dock, the boys caught a low yet distinct tapping which seemed to come from the prow of the boat, where several people were standing. Back of this group was an old-fashioned four-wheeler, one of the derelict night-hawks of the city. Even on this warm night, the doors of this hack were closed, the windows up, and the curtains down. The driver sat on the seat with a slouch hat drawn over his eyes and the collar of a light coat turned up to his ears.

The boys listened to the insistent tapping for a second, and then Jimmie seized Ned by the shoulder and whispered a single word into his ear! Then both listened intently. The word was "Morse."

"Dash—two dots—dash—two dots—dash—two dots—dash—two dots!"

The call signal in the Morse code! Ned took out a heavy pocket knife and rapped out the answering signal on the rail of the boat.

"Listen," Jimmie whispered. "It is .——! W! And there's A, T, C, and H! Got you! Watch!"

Again the tapping went on.

"There's four dots for H, and a dot and a dash for A, and a dash followed by a dot and a dash and a dot for C, and a dash and a dot and a dash for K. Hack!"

"WATCH HACK!" whispered Ned. There must be some one in there who is planning mischief. Perhaps the one who gave the warning knows more about it. Suppose we find out?"

"Who are you?" asked Jimmie, in code.

"Boy Scout—Eagle Patrol!" came back the answer.

"Come forward," went on the tapping.

"Unsafe. Watch the hack," followed, after which came the three-A full stop signal. The talk was evidently over for that night!

The hack landed ahead of the boys, and came to a stop on Greenpoint avenue, near Franklin street. There a young man whom Ned had no difficulty in recognizing as the one who had followed them from the park got out and turned

south. Much to Jimmie's amazement Ned turned north and walked swiftly away.

"Why don't you wait an' see who he is?" asked the boy.

"I don't want any trouble to-night," was the reply, "and, besides, Mud Haley will run the fellow down and report. I should like to know, though, who gave the signal on board the ferry."

"Perhaps Mud will know that, too!" grumbled Jimmie, who had counted on a game of chase with the man who had stepped out of the hack.

"I shouldn't be surprised if he does!" was Ned's answer.

"But why are they trying to 'get' you?" asked Jimmie. "Don't they want you to go after the wreck of the *Reindeer?*"

"I have a notion that they do not!" laughed Ned.

"But how did they find it out so soon?" continued the boy. "This is about the quickest work I ever saw."

"It is my idea," Ned answered, "that they were originally after Sailor Green. I presume the boy did quite a lot of talking before you came across him."

"But what is there wrong in Smith sound?" insisted the little fellow.

"Forget it!" Ned grinned. "Black Bear and Wolf Patrol boys are going to the Arctic regions

on a mission for the Secret Service branch of the United States government! That is all we need to know."

"You received your instructions suddenly, didn't you?"

"By wire from Washington. I guess they had to get the Secretary of State out of bed, from the time it took!"

"Well," Jimmie reasoned, aloud, "it will be just as much fun if I don't know all about it; but, still, I think the polar bear has you beaten to a frazzle when it comes to being confidential."

"You may find polar bears who will want to be too intimate!" laughed Ned. "They are said to be thick in Kennedy channel and Smith sound."

"If they get too confidential," Jimmie grunted, "I'll bring home a beaut of a rug for the Black Bear Patrol clubroom."

When the boys reached the apartment building where they occupied a small flat, Ned stopped in front of the entrance and pointed down at three stones piled one on top of another. As the little heap was directly on the way to the elevator, it was evident that they had been recently placed there. Almost any tenant of the building would have tossed them aside on observing them there.

"Here's another warning!" Ned said.

"Warning?" repeated Jimmie, scratching his head.

"Have you forgotten your Indian signals?" asked Ned, impatiently. "Three stones heaped up in this manner mean that there is danger ahead."

"Sure!" Jimmie replied. "I remember now! I guess we're haunted tonight, Ned," he continued. "There must be something pretty good in his Arctic trip, judging by the way people are trying to beat us out of it! Does this mean that there's trouble ahead of us in the corridor?"

"I shall soon find out whether there is or not!" Ned answered.

The elevator was closed for the night, so the boys began climbing the staircase to the second floor, where their flat was situated. There was a light burning at the head of the stairs, and the corridor which ran in front of their apartments was brilliantly lighted.

There was no one in sight when they pushed their heads up so as to get a view of this corridor, but the outer door of a flat across the hall from their own was open, and as they stepped on the hard floor above the stairs a middle-aged man appeared in the doorway.

"There's been someone here to see you," the man said, when the boys came up to where

he was standing. "He went away about half an hour ago."

"Not so long ago as that," another voice said, from somewhere in the interior of the flat, the voice of a woman. "It wasn't more than ten minutes ago. I guess the last caller came while my husband was in the bath-room! He just knocked on the door once and went away. I heard him moving about in the lower hall after he got down there."

Ned thanked his friends and the two went into their rooms and closed the door, after which they stood for an instant grinning into each other's eyes. Then Ned threw himself into a chair and laughed.

"The young man who crossed the river in the hack came here," he said, "and the lad who rapped out the signals on board the ferry followed him."

"We're in th' limelight tonight, all right!" Jimmie agreed. "If we want to be real sound and safe, we'd better go to bed!"

The little fellow was still surly, because of Ned's unwillingness to enter into a contest with his pursuers. Ned laughed at his sarcastic remark and began preparing for bed.

"I'm going to take your advice!" he said. "I've got to be out early in the morning, and I've got to have a whole head to lug about with

me for the next few months, so I'll keep out of trouble tonight."

"Is Mud Haley a Boy Scout?" asked Jimmie abruptly, as he threw off his coat and sat down in front of an open window.

"He was at one time," Ned answered, "but he went to the bad and was expelled. I tried to prevent that, but he really was too much of a gunman for the lads of the Wolf Patrol to associate with."

"Then, of course, he knows all the signs an' signals?"

"He probably does. But, " Ned went on, "don't get it into your head that Mud Haley was on the ferry, or that he has been here! He may have chanced to meet a friendly Boy Scout, and have taken occasion to send us a warning, but I have an idea that he had nothing to do with the affair on this side of the river. Good-night!"

Jimmie did not go to bed immediately. He switched off the lights and sat by the open window for a long time, declaring that it was hotter in the room than he had ever found it under the equator!

"You'll soon find a cold streak!" laughed Ned.

"You mean up in Smith sound?"

"Long before you get there!" Ned answered.

No more was said for some moments, and Jimmie believed his chum to be asleep. Presently, however, he saw him get out of bed and walk to the second window on that side of the room, which window, like the one at which Jimmie sat, faced the street.

From the bed where Ned had been lying a view of the building across the street could be had, and it was to get a better view of something which had attracted his attention that the boy had left his bed. Now he pointed to the third floor of the structure opposite.

"If I were you, Freckles," he said, "I wouldn't sit in that open window! There's a fellow over there, at a window opening from a hallway on the third floor, who, unless I'm greatly mistaken, is trying to get a shot at you."

Jimmie bounded away like a rubber ball.

"Why didn't you say so quicker?" he demanded. "What did you see?"

"The glint of light on a weapon! Good thing you didn't have a light on! Now we'll go to bed!"

The boys did not sleep much that night, but they were early astir for all that. They met Jack and Frank at Mr. Bosworth's office and were informed that the *Arctic* could be completed and provisioned inside of two days. While

they were talking Sailor Green came in, dressed in a new suit and looking not at all like the hungry, ragged boy who had met Jimmie near the park the evening before.

"I want you boys to hurry off," Mr. Bosworth said, with a smile, "because it is unsafe to have you around! Some one even tried to blow up the *Arctic* last night!"

CHAPTER IV

BEYOND THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

The *Arctic* sailed out of New York harbor on Saturday, the 11th of May, fully provisioned for three months. As there were only six boys on board, Harry Stevens, Ned Nestor, Jack Bosworth, Frank Shaw, Jimmie McGraw, and Sailor Green, it was not necessary to take up much room with stores, especially as it was believed that wild game would be plenty beyond the Arctic Circle.

The motors and gasoline and oil tanks, however, took up a large amount of space. The motors were in duplicate and very powerful, capable of sending the boat through any ordinary sea at the rate of forty miles an hour. However, it was not thought that any such speed would be necessary to make the trip to Lady Franklin bay and back before the long Polar nights set in. At the lower end of Smith sound, the sun disappears entirely about the last of November, and shows again not far from the 18th of the following February.

The gasoline supply was an important proposition, and so, besides filling several very

large tanks with the fluid, Mr. Stevens had provided a tender to be towed by the *Arctic*. This tender, sheated with iron and with a prow almost as sharp as a razor, did not retard the speed of the motor boat to any appreciable extent. It held two large compartments, one for gasoline and one for crude oil to be used for heating.

Seen from a distance, the *Arctic* resembled a submarine, as it was built with enclosed deck. If you care to know about the interior, take a piece of timber thirty inches long by eighteen wide and ten high. Let the inches represent feet. Now carve the block in the shape of a boat, rather wide at the stern, leaving two inches of solid wood on each side. Let the depression stop within three inches of the outer lower surface. Now set in a steel deck two inches below the upper edge of the block. This, in the actual boat, would leave a railing two feet high around the entire deck. Now, in the center of the deck, set a cabin eight inches by fourteen, letting the ceiling of the same extend four inches above the level of the deck, giving a headway of about nine inches.

Fill all the space inside the hull up to the cabin walks with stores, divided into compartments, except a narrow space at the rear of the cabin, which must be saved for the machinery, the motors and the electric lighting apparatus.

Now arch the deck from the railing with sheet steel, and you will have an imperfect model of the *Arctic* as she sailed across the Circle on the 21st of May, ten days out of New York.

It may be well to say that, as protection against ice pressure, oak timbers two feet square, passed across the boat, from side to side at regular intervals, the tops of those cutting through the cabin standing about two feet above the floor and being utilized as seats! They "cluttered" the cabin not a little, but were thought necessary.

All the way up from New York, Harry Stevens had been studying navigation, so as to enable him to take locations, and maps of the territory to be visited, from New Foundland to Lady Franklin bay, were scattered over the cabin floor most of the time. When the boy announced that they were crossing the Circle it was twelve by the clock in the cabin, and Jimmie grinned as he asked:

"Night or day?"

"Night," answered Harry. "Look out of the bull's eye and see the midnight sun! You've heard a lot about it! Now, take a look at it!"

"There's an ocean liner to the north!" shouted Jimmie, as he looked out of the companion way. "Wonder what she is doing here?"

"Ocean liner!" cried Frank Shaw. "That is an iceberg! See the clumsy old thing!"

"S-a-a-y!" Harry Stevens shouted, "how would you like to have that old ice house down on Rivington street tonight? That would be going some, wouldn't it?"

"What good would that do?" demanded Jimmie. "The water from it would be salt, wouldn't it?"

"Salt! I should say not! That iceberg is the child of a glacier, and is composed of snow, principally. It may be ten thousand years of age, and may live ten thousand years more, for all we know."

Up to this time the boys had been looking through a protected window in the deck covering. Now they swung a sliding door aside and stepped out into the keen air, standing on a narrow platform which ran around the boat outside of the sheathing.

"You're wrong about the berg livin' ten thousan' years yet," Sailor Green declared. "See the caves an' gulleys in the bulk of it? It is what Lieut. Reis called a 'ripe berg,' and will go to pieces before the winter comes on. Then it will become a part of the pack."

The boys stopped the motors in order that they might have a longer view of the arctic wonder. As soon as the popping ceased, the

sound of waves beating on the iceberg reached their ears. The sound was not unlike that caused by an angry sea lashing a rocky coast.

"From now on," Sailor Green said, "we'll see plenty of them. Last summer I counted as many as five hundred in sight at one time. They came mostly from Humboldt glacier, which covers the east shore of Kennedy channel, from 79 to 80, north latitude."

"It is larger than the Flatiron building!" Jimmie suggested.

"You'll soon see bergs with a population of polar bears," laughed Sailor Green. "I don't think any other company of Boy Scouts ever had that opportunity!"

"Whee!" Frank sputtered. "I'm about frozen! Suppose we go inside and close the door. My! Ten days ago we were stewing in New York! That night certainly was a corker—for a night in May!"

"There were times, even on that night," grinned Jimmie, "when I felt chills running up my back!"

"That must have been when Ned told you to get away from the window," laughed Harry Stevens. "Isn't it strange the boy asked, turning to Ned, "that we have never, since that night, met with any hostility?"

"They kept things moving that time, though," Jimmie grinned.

"Huh!" Jack interrupted, "I should like to know how any one could threaten us here, out on the open ocean. We've passed every vessel we've seen, at the clip we have been going!"

"There are boats that can go just as fast as the *Arctic*," Ned said, after a pause. "Anyway, they wouldn't be apt to attack us on the open sea, but would wait until they saw if we really were making for the point where Lieut. Reis is buried, and where the *Reindeer* went down."

"Then it is your idea that we haven't gotten rid of the strong-arm fellows?" asked Jimmie.

"They had some evil motive for trying to prevent our taking this trip to the north," Ned answered. "I think I know what that motive was, and believe that they have it still! I'm not posing as a prophet of evil, but I'm looking for trouble between this point and Lady Franklin bay."

"If there is anything up there they don't want us to have," Harry argued, "why don't they go and get it? Why do they wait for us to go after it, in the hope, possibly, of taking it away from us?"

"There seems to be only one person on earth," Ned replied, "who knows exactly where the cairn is and where the *Reindeer* was blown up."

"And that one person is Sailor Green!" cried Jimmie, slapping the boy on the shoulder. "So we'll have to take good care of him."

"But the Esquimaux ought to know where the ship went down, and it ought to be easy to find the cairn," Jack Bosworth urged.

"There are no Esquimaux there," Sailor Green cut in. "The race is dying out, as is the race of dogs. What few there are left are nearer Cape Alexander than Cape Forbes. Even if there were natives about Peabody bay, there would be no traces of the *Reindeer*, for they would have burned every timber long ago."

The boys talked for a long time of the possibilities of trouble on the way to Lady Franklin bay. It was after midnight, still the sun was shining! It did not seem to the lads as if they ought to go to bed at all! And there were the icebergs! Towering above the surface of the water higher than the largest sky-scraper in New York! Some of them were a mile in length!

The boys continued to make good speed after the Circle was passed. They studied navigation and traced maps most of the time when they were not cooking and eating. The coast of Greenland lay away to the east, with its mountain tops mostly veiled by heavy clouds. Indeed the water itself was frequently curtained off by dense fogs, so that the boat was sent too

slowly ahead. To the west lay Grinnell land, only a shadow at best—with mountains indistinctly sticking summits out of mantles of cloud.

The boys made no landing near the Circle for they were not satisfied that they could win through shoals and tiny islands without a pilot. When they came to the vicinity of Upernavik, however, they thought it advisable to procure a supply of fresh water, so tied up to an iceberg and began "milking" it, as Jimmie expressed it.

The Danish town of Upernavik is not only the end of safe navigation; it is the end of civilization! Seeing the *Arctic* tied to a berg near by, a native pilot came out, and the boat was run in close to the shore. They found the harbor a safe one and the people glad to meet them. They remained there only an hour and then went on.

Immediately after leaving the town they entered a fleet of icebergs which seemed to effectually block the way to the north. These huge floating islands of ice appeared to the boys to be endless. They were of all shapes and sizes. Some resembled lofty cathedrals, with spires and towers tipped with gold by the sun.

"Think of a procession like that without a brass band ahead of it!" Jimmie exclaimed.

"There wouldn't be room enough for it to form on the whole of Manhattan island, and yet there isn't a green flag in line!"

"That ain't no menagerie," Sailor Green declared, "but I see something that makes a noise like Central Park Zoo, for all that!"

"Show it to me!" ordered Jimmie. "If there's anything doin' in the way of polar bears, me for the thick of it!"

The next moment a giant iceberg came stumbling toward the *Arctic*, great waterfalls roaring from its heights and breakers of ice beating back the water at its base. The formation was at least two hundred feet in height, and appeared to be as long as from the Battery to Chatham Square.

Half way to the top a shelf ran along the front —that part facing the motor boat—and on this shelf, walking to and fro and snarling in the desperation of hunger, were two polar bears!

"Gee!" Jimmie shouted.

"Let me land!" cried Frank.

"Put us off here!" Jack demanded.

"Give me a fish and I'll go feed the menagerie" Harry put in.

Sailor Green looked at the eager faces of the boys and laughed.

"It isn't safe to go aboard the iceberg," he declared. "Those bears have been floating

for no one knows how long. They probably reached the berg from a floe, and have had nothing to eat save a bird or two since cut off from the shore."

"They can't get to us if we follow the ledge which shoulders on the ice above the one where they are," asserted Frank, who was already hunting up his fur jacket, cap and muffler. "We can get out there and acquire a couple of rugs in no time."

"I advise you to let the bears alone," Ned warned.

"Oh, they'll starve to death, anyway," Jimmie declared.

Ned and Sailor Green advised strongly against a landing, but the boys were full of life and willing to take any risk, so the boat was gotton off the deck and into the water, and Frank, Jack, Harry, and Jimmie were soon on the iceberg, which was swaying from side to side as if the top was becoming too heavy for the part below the surface.

They received a warm reception from the bears. The hungry animals advanced toward them, but were unable to reach the place where they stood because they were on a higher shelf. However, the beasts made up in growls and snarls for what the reception lacked in personal contact!

"We'll have to lasso them," Frank advised, "before we shoot, for they will tumble off into the sea when wounded, and we'll lose the rugs. I'll throw the noose, and you boys shoot as soon as I get it landed."

This was agreed to, and the boys prepared for the capture of the rugs. But the bears seemed to have a different idea as to the outcome of the invasion of their floating habitation. When Frank was ready to toss the line the bears were nowhere to be seen.

"They've ducked into a cave!" Jimmie declared. "We'll have to get down to that shelf and follow them in."

"Not for mine!" grinned Jack. "No coming into the same apartment with a hungry polar bear for me!"

"I'll go with you!" Frank shouted. "Come on, Jimmie! We'll have all the fun to ourselves!'

In spite of warnings shouted from the motor boat, Jimmie and Frank scrambled down to the shelf upon which the bears had been seen. It was a very wide shelf, and heaps of feathers showed the lads that the bears had lived there a long time, and had succeeded in catching a few birds. In a moment Frank pointed to the cave which the bears had entered. It extended for some distance into the ice, running up-

ward at an angle of at least forty degrees, making quite a climb.

"We can never get up there," Jimmie complained. "We'll have to do something to bring them out."

But it was not necessary for the boys to do anything to bring the bears out, for just then they came out in a furry heap, landing almost on top of the hunters!

CHAPTER V

TWO BEARS AND AN ICEBERG

The iceberg had toppled to the south, and the bears had shot down the now almost vertical floor of the cave. The boys, being directly in front of the entrance, had mixed with the great beasts as they came tumbling, sliding, falling, snarling, out of the nearly upright tunnel!

The shelf upon which the lads stood was now an uncertain surface, tipping to the south at an angle of forty degrees! The ice was melting under the spring sunshine. Frank and Jimmie both felt their feet going out from under their bodies as the bears, struck against them and what was more natural than that they should seize for support the first thing which came to hand? This chanced to be the furry coats of the bears!

There the lads hung, just at the edge of the shelf, a hundred feet above the sea! The ugly claws of the polars did good service then, for the beasts hung on like grim death, with the lads clinging to them.

The lofty peaks of the iceberg overhung the *Arctic*, and every moment increased the peril

of those on board. Should the peaks break off, that would be the end of the Boy Scout expedition to Lady Franklin bay. Every person on board would be crushed beneath the great weight, and the motor boat would be carried to the bottom.

Ned shouted to the boys to hang on and ran to the motors. With the mass of ice hanging threateningly above, he turned on power and succeeded in getting beyond the zone of danger. Frank and Jimmie, still grasping the bears, who were too busy keeping their sharp claws buried in the sloping shelf to pay any attention to their unwelcome guests, heard the clatter of the motors and abandoned hope.

They understood the peril the *Arctic* was in, and knew that the only way to save the boat was to get it beyond the reach of falling ice. The one question in their minds was whether Ned could keep the boat near enough to rescue them in case the hold of the bears should relax and they should all tumble into the sea together.

They heard the crash of falling ice above, and looked up to see a mass lodged on the shelf where they had previously stood. This seemed to serve as a barrier, for Harry and Jack were looking down over a breastwork of ice, presumably in no danger of falling unless a further tip

of the berg should throw off the lodged piece and send them down with it.

Directly, when the claws of the bears seemed to be slipping, Jimmie heard Ned calling to the lads on the upper ledge. The boat was now off to the east, and far enough away to escape destruction unless the berg should whirl and topple over in that direction.

"The lines!" Ned shouted to Harry and Jack. "Heave the lines down to the boys! Make loops and send the lines down!"

"And hurry up, too!" panted Frank. "My bear is getting unsteady on his feet! Throw a noose down and I will catch it!"

Frank and Jimmie still declare that it took Jack and Harry half a century to make the nooses and swing them down! The bears probably had the same notion, for the weight of the boys was carrrying them slowly but surely off the shelf, which was tipping forward every second!

The first line thrown went wide of its mark, but Jimmie caught the second one and, slipping it under his arms, was laboriously drawn up. The line in Jack's hands tangled at first, and Frank seized it just as the bear he was clinging to slipped toward the precipice below. He, too, was drawn up, though it required the efforts

of all three boys to drag him over the edge of the ledge above.

While the four panted for breath they felt the berg quiver under their feet, toppling to a fall. They lost no time in scrambling down the shelf they had first mounted and reaching the water's edge. The rowboat they had used in reaching the iceberg was some distance away, having been swept back by the surge of water consequent upon the sinking of the mass.

Jimmie sprang for it, missed, and went head-first into the sea. He rose to the surface after what seemed an age of waiting and struck out for the rowboat. The water was, of course, frightfully cold, and the boy's clothing was heavy and cumbersome, so he might have gone to the bottom but for the floating blocks of ice, broken from the berg. These he grasped at short intervals, and so finally gained the *Boy Scout*, as the row boat was named.

For a moment or two he was in no condition to take the oars. He lay in the bottom of the boat, panting for breath and shivering, until the voices of the boys on the iceberg reached his ears, then he scrambled to his feet and worked the boat up to the berg, which was now whirling around like a top in the water, threatening to go to pieces at any moment.

The three lads on the berg managed to reach

the boat without getting wet, and two took the oars. Urged on by warning cries from the motor boat, the rowers strained every muscle in an effort to get out from the zone of the iceberg before the final collapse came.

The *Arctic*, too, was drawing away, for Ned knew that a great mass of ice like the one in view made a great commotion in going to pieces, so the *Boy Scout* had to be rowed some distance. At last, however, the boys were on the protected deck of the motor boat, and Jimmie was hurried to the cabin, where he was stripped and given dry clothing.

"Jerusalem!" the little fellow chattered. "I'm so cold that I could make that water look like burning oil! I reckon I'll never get warm again!"

But he did get warm again, and that right suddenly, for Frank stuck his head in at the cabin door and shouted out that the berg was going to pieces, and that the bears were still putting up a plucky fight for life. Notwithstanding his fit of the shivers, the boy was out of the cabin in a second, and out of the deck-shelter, too, standing on the platform.

The iceberg toppled over as he reached the platform, and he came near getting another Arctic bath. He hung on, however, and watched the bears as the *Arctic* lifted, sank,

pitched, and swayed under the upheaval of waters. Great waves swept high up on the steel sheathing, and Jimmie got well sprinkled if he did not get a full bath!

"Look at the bears now!" Frank shouted, catching Jimmie's arm. "If they get on that pack they'll make the shore, and we'll lose two fine rugs. Let me get a gun!"

Jimmie caught Frank by the shoulder as he turned inside and held him back, much against the boy's will.

"Let the bears alone!" Jimmie said. "Give 'em a fightin' chance for life! They got the two of us out of a bad mess, now don't go an' pay 'em back by shootin' 'em."

"You're all right, me son!" Frank grinned. "It would be a shame to shoot the nervy fellows. See 'em swim! There they go, on the pack, and they'll be residents of Greenland in no time."

"Good-bye, bears!" Jimmie shouted. "Hurry back!"

"They'll come back—not!" Frank advised.

There was little talked of that night save the narrow escape the four boys had had, and all agreed that no needless risks should be taken in the future. Jimmie grinned as he promised to be more conservative.

"The little monkey will be in trouble again

before the sun sets!" one of the boys said. "I see it in his eyes!"

"It will be a long time before the sun sets!" laughed Ned.

When the others were in their bunks, which let down from the walls of the cabin, Ned drew Sailor Green to one side.

"Lieutenant Reis, you say," Ned began, "was domineering and brutal in his treatment of his men?"

"Yes; indeed he was," answered the other.

"Yet he must have had at least one intimate friend on board the *Reindeer*. There must have been some one man who believed in him."

"There was a sailor," the other began, "who was closer to the commander than any of the others. It was understood on board that they had been boys together in some New England town. It was Denton, as the sailor was called, who saw that the commander was buried decently. He was often at the cairn in the long night. I guess he mourned the man, though he had never been shown any favors by the lieutenant, that I know of."

"After the *Reindeer* went into winter quarters at Peabody bay," Ned asked, "were the commander and this man Denton much together? After the trouble which ended in

the death of the commander started, were the two men often together?"

"Yes, often together; but Denton was kept up to his work, just the same. The sailing master hated him."

"And the other members of the crew?"

"He hadn't a friend on board the ship."

"There were no scientists on board?"

"No; only the officers and crew."

"Nor any scientific apparatus?"

"Not that I ever heard of."

"Now, what happened to Denton after the commander was killed?"

"He acted like a man who feared for his life. He kept out of the way of the others as much as possible, going hunting and sleeping in a snow cave near the store house where the wild game was kept."

"You were friendly with him?"

"Yes; I often slept with him in the snow cave."

"Are snow caves used much up there?" asked Ned.

"Yes; the Esquimaux always use them. They are warmed by oil lamps."

"I understand. Now, were you on the boat the night she was blown up—at any time that night, I mean?"

"Yes; I went to the snow cave because

everybody on board was drunk. Denton left for the same reason. The intoxicated men were threatening his life. There was a lot of brandy consumed there after the commander was murdered."

"The men were particularly fierce after Denton that night?" asked the boy, making a note of the last answer.

"Yes; he told me that they were being urged on by the little man and the big blonde who had shared the commander's quarters."

"He never told you why they wished him dead?"

"He never did."

"What did he say that night in the snow cave?"

"He said they would get him in time if he didn't get them."

"He expected to be killed?"

"He certainly did."

"In fact, Denton was utterly hopeless?"

"That is the way I look at it."

"And burning with hate and a thirst for revenge?"

"That is it exactly, sir."

"Now, was he in the snow cave with you when the ship was blown up?"

"No; he left me an hour before. I know what you are getting at," Sailor Green went on.

"You want to know whether Denton blew up the *Reindeer*. Well, if you leave it to me, he did! I'm sure of it!"

"He never told you what he intended doing?"

"He never did, though I suspected. One day I saw him with dynamite which had been brought out to clear out the fire hole."

"And so, half starved, half crazed, hopeless of getting back to civilization, Denton murdered the entire crew?"

"More out of revenge than anything else, sir. He knew that they would in time catch him off his guard and kill him, and so, the way I figure it out, he made up his mind to take them all with him when he went. And he did it, too!"

"But are you sure that he perished that night?"

"Why, of course I never saw his body, but I never saw many of the other bodies, either. They went through the ice. Those that were in the cabin must have been stunned or killed by the concussion and went down with the hull. Those who were on the canvas-covered deck must have been blown to atoms."

"How long were you there alone after the explosion?"

"Three weeks; until almost the first of March. It was a miracle the whaler got down to Cape

Forbes in the winter and then got through Smith Sound—a miracle!"

"Plenty to eat in the storehouse?"

"Yes; indeed. Enough to feed a man for years."

"And the snow cave was reasonably warm?"

"I had no fault to find, only it was lonesome! I had fresh meat, plenty of oil and warm clothes in the cave and in the storehouse, but no companionship!"

"And during all that time you saw nothing of Denton?"

"Not a thing, sir."

"The provisions in the storehouse were never disturbed?"

"Well, they might have been without my knowing of it."

"Denton might have blown up the *Reindeer* and still escaped?"

"Why, yes, I think so. I could have done so."

"Yet you think he killed himself, too?"

"I have never thought of that phase of the matter before."

"Did Denton ever visit the commander's cabin after the murder?"

"Yes, many times—until the guests ordered him away."

"Now, if he had wanted the world to know of the murder of Reis, if he had desired those who

came after to know of the mission of the *Reindeer*, if he had longed for a justification of his act, he might have put a written record in the cairn where Reis was buried?"

"Yes, that would be like him. Say," the boy went on, with wide open eyes, "I know why you are going to Lady Franklin bay! You think there is a record in the Reis cairn which tells of the mission of the *Reindeer*—which tells where to find the thing the commander was ordered to get at Lady Franklin bay! The ship was on a secret mission, and that mission, you think, was hostile to the United States. You hope to uncover it all at Lady Franklin bay?"

CHAPTER VI

A BOY SCOUT UNDER SUSPICION

"What sort of a secret mission do you refer to?" asked Ned, with a smile. "Why do you say secret mission?"

"Because the *Reindeer* wasn't whaling, wasn't exploring, wasn't on a pleasure trip! Everybody on board knew that she was on a secret mission to Lady Franklin bay!"

"How was all this discovered?"

"Because no one was told what was doing! They told us all that she was going after a cargo of northern lights! Think of that! And the day before she left New York, she was visited by all kinds of distinguished-looking people, speaking all kinds of jargon! I knew all the time that there was something underhanded about her cruise."

"And that," laughed Ned, "is just what the people at Washington had in mind! The *Reindeer* was up to mischief. When the untruthful news came that she had been destroyed, through the boat that brought you out, and that every soul on board had perished, there was a sensation at Washington. It was feared that other na-

tions would believe the destruction of the ship had been planned there."

"Then you are going to Lady Franklin bay to find out what Commander Reis was going after?"

"It all depends on what I find at Cape Forbes," Ned replied. "Now, tell me whom you talked with about this matter on the way down, and what you said to others in New York before you met Jimmie."

"Oh, I talked some of course, but I've just got here. No, I don't remember what I said."

"You told of Denton?"

"Probably."

"And his visits to the cabin and the cairn?"

"Possibly I did, though I don't know who I told about it."

"And hinted that the two guests sought his life because he was on intimate terms with the commander—as intimate terms as a sailor can ever be on with his chief officer?"

"I talked about the mysterious guests, but I don't remember what I said concerning them."

"Enough to stir up a scrap," laughed Ned.

"Well, what do these people want—the people who are pursuing you?"

"They want the deposits at Cape Forbes and Lady Franklin bay kept out of the hands of the government—if there are such deposits!"

"You think they will try to beat you to them?" asked Sailor Green.

"They will try to keep me from getting to them."

It was four o'clock by the cabin clock when Ned and the boy went to sleep. The sun was shining, for it was late in May and warm days were coming, but they darkened the windows and tried to make themselves believe that it was really night!

It was nine o'clock when Ned was awakened by Jimmie, who stood by the side of the bunk with a grin on his freckled face.

"Get up!" the little fellow said. "There's a Boy Scout coming on board the *Arctic*!"

"A Boy Scout!" repeated Ned. "Where from?"

"Probably from Upernavik."

"But we ought to be quite a distance north of that town," urged Ned.

"We are not," was the reply. "We halted to interview two bears, you remember," with a grin which showed all his teeth, "and just as soon as you got to bed this morning there was a block of ice, and we have been standing still ever since. It is clear below, but there is a pack to the north, and it is cold, and the wind is blowing from the east to beat four of a kind. Get up and see the Boy Scout."

"How do you know he is a Boy Scout?" demanded Ned, getting into his clothes in a hurry.

"He wig-wagged to the boat!"

"Oh, he did! People who are not Boy Scouts wig-wag sometimes!"

"Not in the way he did!"

Ned was soon on deck, looking out of a window in the steel sheathing. To the north the ice was breaking up and grinding with a noise like thunder, to the south lay a clear body of water—that is, clear save for occasional fleets of ice blocks which separated themselves from the pack and went bobbing down Baffin bay.

There was a strong wind from the east, and the *Arctic* now and then reeled under its blows. Still, this gale seemed to have no effect at all on an odd-looking boat and its occupant which showed toward the distant harbor of Upernavik.

Now the craft was deluged with water, now a block of ice drifted against it, now a combing wave hurled it rods on its backward path, but still it kept steadily on, with one double-bladed paddle flashing in the Arctic sunlight.

"What do you make of it?" Ned asked Frank, who stood by his side.

Frank shook his head, but Sailor Green answered the question.

"That is a kayak," he said.

"And what is a kayak?" demanded Jimmie. "It looks like a rug afloat on a stormy sea, with one leg going on each side."

While the boys looked the boat came to a quiet position, under the lee of a floating block. Here the occupant lifted his paddle to a vertical position and dropped it over to the right.

"There's you Myer code," grinned Jimmie. "See what he says."

"Two to the right, one to the left, one to the right!" Frank read. "Two ones and a two and a one! That's W. Two ones. That's A. One number one. That's I. Two number twos. That's T."

"WAIT!" Jimmie exclaimed. "He wants to talk with us."

"I knew we'd find a Boy Scout somewhere," Jack, cut in "but I wasn't looking for one in Baffin bay!"

Ned signaled back—double two, double two, three—meaning that he understood—and then the paddle was lowered to the water and the boat came on again, bobbing about on the rough sea a great deal, but eventually reaching the *Arctic*.

"I wonder if he talks United States?" whispered Jimmie to Frank, as a youth of about twenty, clad entirely in furs, clambered into the doorway opened for him.

"Of course," Frank replied, "for he wig-wagged in United States."

The visitor was short and heavily built. As he threw back the fur hood of the coat he wore the boys saw that he had a distinctly Esquimaux face with something in the expression which told of American blood.

"Came aboard, sir!" the boy said, saluting Ned.

"And welcome!" the latter answered.

The visitor's English was excellent, and he carried himself like one familiar with the sort of company in which he now found himself.

"I tried to catch you at Upernavik," he said, "but you were ahead of me. I have just come up from the south."

"You live at Upernavik?" asked Ned, after the guest was seated in the cabin.

"Yes," was the reply, "but I have been away on a mission."

"You have not always lived there?" asked Ned.

"Oh, no, I was born in Chicago, during the World's Fair, and lived there until three years ago. Then I came home."

"What patrol?' asked Jimmie, giving the full salute of the Boy Scout. "You've got the wig-wag fine!"

"Fox, Chicago," was the reply. "It seems

fine to meet a Scout once more. I've had a long struggle getting here, but I'm glad I came."

"I hope for a long visit," Ned said.

"That depends on you," was the reply. "I thought you might need an interpreter."

"Just the thing!" Ned exclaimed. "You'll remain with us?"

"If you need me, yes."

"What kind of a marine monster have you out there?" Jimmie asked, as the other boys came flocking into the cabin.

"That's a kayak," was the reply.

"I told you so!" remarked Sailor Green.

"Looks like it would float in a heavy dew!" Harry observed.

"Or run down a mountain and never tip over!" Jack cut in.

In a short time the kayak was lifted to the deck of the motor boat and the boys made a closer examination of it. The Greenland kayak is certainly the queerest piece of marine architecture afloat. It is about eighteen feet long, by as many inches in width at the center, and carries an up-curving line to each end.

The frame is made of light wood, while the covering is of tanned skins, carefully sewed together. The boat is about nine inches deep and the top is covered like the bottom, there

being only a round hole in the center which admits the occupant as far as the hips.

This body-hole is surrounded by a frame to which the jacket of the rider is fastened, making the interior perfectly dry in the heaviest storm —the entire craft being weaterproof, no matter how fierce the assualts of the waves. It has no keel and rides on the water like a floating rug, as Jimmie expressed it.

"I'm going to take a ride in that, some day when I've got more time than I have now!" Jimmie declared.

"I'd need a lot of time on my hands if I ever got into that," Frank observed. "It isn't safe!"

"You can't get wet in it!" Sailor Green ventured.

"Unless it turns turtle and keeps your head under the water all the time!" Frank replied. "It doesn't look good to me!"

"Anyway," Jimmie insisted, "I'm goin' to learn to ride in it! What's the use of comin' away up here if you've got to stick to a ferry boat f'r travel'? Me f'r it, anyway!"

The boy did not dream when he spoke so glibly of riding in the kayak under what conditions he was to venture forth in it!

"It is perfectly easy to ride a kayak," the stranger declared, stepping up to the boys.

"I learned in a few days. If you boys want to have the time of your lives, I'll teach you the game."

Jimmie jumped at the proposition, and was soon discussing the proposed lessons with the visitor, who gave his name as Bruske, Tom Bruske, late of Chicago, but now of Upernavik, Greenland, as he stated.

All the time the two boys were talking Sailor Green had been watching Bruske with a curious expression on his face. It seemed to him that he had seen the boy somewhere, yet he could not recall the time or place.

"What do you think of him?" Frank asked, observing the attention the visitor was receiving from Sailor Green.

"I don't know what to think," was the answer.

"Do all Esquimaux look like that?" Frank asked.

He doesn't look much like an Esquimaux, when you study his face," Sailor replied. "With his furs on and his head framed in the hood, he does look like a native Greenlander, but now, with his fur coat off and hood not in sight, he looks more like a foxy American than an Esquimaux."

"He says he was born in Chicago, World's

Fair year," Frank said, "and came back to Greenland three years ago."

"Yes, I heard that, but I don't believe he has been three years at Upernavik. He wouldn't be so spry. It is a lazy, grease-fed life in that town. Then why did he chase us up in his kayak? Why didn't he come to us while we were in town?"

"Oh, you're a suspicious chap!" laughed Frank. "Bruske is all to the good, so far as I can see. He can teach us to talk the lingo of the land and to ride the wicked kayak! We'll have no end of fun with him."

From that first day Bruske made himself thoroughly at home on the motor boat. He was given a bunk near Ned's, and the two often talked together when they should have been asleep. However, Ned had not yet become accustomed to sleeping when the sun shone, so he was awake a good many hours out of the twenty-four. Considerable of this time was spent in the company of Bruske, who soon became a general favorite.

Sailor Green alone held aloof from the interpreter. He had no reason to give for his aversion to the lad, yet he admitted to a feeling of repulsion in his presence.

A week passed, and the *Arctic* was fighting her way toward Cape Forbes with all the strength

of her powerful motors. There was melting, breaking pack ice ahead, and progress was slow. There were icebergs innumerable, too, and these often caused the boys to slow down when the way was comparatively free of the pack. It was nearly June now, and Ned began to fear that he would not be able to make Lady Franklin bay and get back before the long polar night set in.

Almost night and day the boy watched the water, edging through an ice field here so as to gain a few hundred yards, working around a flock of bergs there so as to get into more favorable position. One night, shortly after he had visited the deck and returned discouraged to his bunk, he felt a soft pull at his sleeve and sat up to see Sailor Green looking down upon him, alarm depicted on his good-natured face.

"There's something strange going on," the Sailor said. "Listen!"

What Ned heard sounded like the sharp whistling of a steam exhaust.

"There are no steamers here!" he said. "What does it mean?"

"I heard it while you were up," the boy said. "You were too busy with the motors to notice it, I guess. After you came into the cabin I stood out on the platform listening, and saw a signal."

"A signal, lad! You must be mistaken. Where did the signal come from, and what was it like?"

"It came from the *Arctic*," was the astonishing reply, "and it was a red light, moving this way and that, and up and down. Bruske held it!"

CHAPTER VII

THE BELL IN THE FOG

Ned dressed hastily and went to the deck. The electric light at the middle of the space enclosed by the steel sheathing was out, of course, but the deck was dimly seen; there was no one in sight.

In a second Sailor Green came out of the cabin and reported that the interpreter was in his bunk, apparently sound asleep! He seemed half ashamed as he made the statement.

"I might have been mistaken!" he admitted.

Ned did not believe this, but he did not say so.

"From which part of the deck were the signals given?" he asked.

"From the sliding door at the stern," was the reply.

"The door was open?"

"No; the redlight was held up to the glass."

"What did the light look like? Was it one of the boat's lanterns?"

"It did not seem to be."

"It won't take long to find out," Ned said, after a moment's thought.

"You go into the cabin and keep moving around. If Bruske is playing possum, that will

cause him to lie still and keep his eyes closed. I want to have a quiet look around the deck."

Sailor Green disappeared and Ned began a patient examination of the stern deck. After a long search he came to a shred of red cloth which had caught on a sliver near the stern sliding door.

After examining the texture of the cloth, he went to the cupboard where the electric searchlights were kept. One large one was out of position, as if it had been hastily returned to the cupboard. Ned took out his microscope and examined it.

Distributed over the glass were minute particles of red cloth! The fibers of the piece he had found on deck matched those on the glass!

"An electric searchlight, veiled with red, makes a very good signal in a fog!" the boy mused. Now the question is this: To whom was he signalling? That is what I want to know now!"

Ned glanced in the cabin, saw that Bruske was still on his bunk, with Sailor Green not far away, and then passed out on the platform. He heard nothing save the grinding of the ice and the roaring of the wind at first, but presently there came to his ears the low, steady breathing of a steam exhaust! The midnight sun was now seen very dimly through the fog,

but he was able to see over only a limited circle in the immediate vicinity of the boat.

Finally the vibrating of a steel stack being hastily fired caught his ear. It came from the west, over toward the shore line of Grinnell land. The steamer, whoever or wherever she was, was getting on power for a fast run.

Ned sat down on the breezy platform and listened patiently for half an hour, until his fingers and face, protected as they were grew cold. During this time the clamor of the steam exhaust did not advance to the north.

It seemed to him that the vessel was trying hard to make headway against the pack and was not succeeding.

But why had the interpreter given a signal at all? If he knew of the presence of a steamer there why had he not reported the fact to the members of the crew?

And here was another point. Had the steamer sent a boat to the *Arctic*? Had Bruske communicated verbally with some one from the mysterious craft? Had the red light been designed merely to locate the spy on board the *Arctic*, and so give direction to the oarsmen on the boat paying the visit?

Surely, such a light as could be thrown from an electric searchlight, muffled in cloth, would not show far through a fog, with even

faint sunlight on the waters! There surely must have been a boat, he reasoned.

After thinking over the matter for some moments he moved softly into the cabin and, awaking Jimmie, asked him to come out to the deck, after dressing himself warmly. Scenting adventure, the boy was soon out of the cabin, with Sailor Green close at his side.

"Now," Ned explained, when the three stood together on the forward deck, "I want you boys to assist in getting the *Boy Scout* into the water. Do you know," he went on, turning to Sailor Green, "whether Bruske is really asleep, or whether he is shamming?"

"He is asleep, fast enough," the boy answered. "He was shamming for a time, but he is sound asleep now."

"Then we must get the rowboat out without making much noise," Ned continued. "It is just as well that he should not know what is going on here. He will know later on, of course."

Jimmie's eyes opened to their capacity.

"What's doing?" he asked.

"There is no time to waste in explanations now," Ned answered. "If you will open the side door, we'll get the boat out."

"If you're going out in her," Jimmie exclaimed, "I'm going with you."

"I saw him first!" laughed Sailor Green. "You're too small to go out on an expedition like this, anyway!"

Jimmie made a wry face, wrinkling up his freckled nose to show his disapproval, and turned to Ned.

"Do I go?" he asked.

"I want you to remain on the *Arctic*," Ned replied. "Green will go with me this time. While we are gone keep close watch on Bruske."

"Is he crooked?" asked the boy. "Is he tryin' to t'row us down?"

"If he attempts to leave the boat, or to make signals of any kind," Ned concluded, "wake the other boys and quell him!"

"You bet we'll quell him!" Jimmie answered. "But why don't you tell a feller what's doing?"

"All in good time," smiled Ned. "All you have to do now is to open the side door and help get the *Boy Scout* out with as little racket as possible. If Bruske gets ugly, sit down on him!"

"I'll plant myself on his tummy good and plenty!" Jimmie asserted.

The waves were dashing high, with blocks of ice running in them, and the fog was closing down rapidly. There was a strong wind from the east, and, altogether, the outlook for a trip in the rowboat was gloomy enough, though it was

not extremely cold, not much below freezing.

When, at last, the boat was in the water, on the west side, Ned and Sailor Green took their places at the oars. A floe came drifting down and came near crushing the frail craft against the side of the *Arctic*.

Sailor Green advised taking a third boy in to manage the rudder, but Ned objected to so much weight.

"We can row and steer too, all right," he declared.

Jimmie looked disconsolate as the boat sped away in the fog. At first he tried to follow her course, but the craft was soon out of sight. It was while he was listening for the sound of the oars that his ears caught the whistling exhaust of steam.

Presently a bell tolled through the fog, striking six, then four, then six again. He listened intently, but when the sound came again a fierce gust of wind swept down and only one soft note was heard.

"I know what's doing!" the lad mused. "Ned said to quell Bruske if he tried to leave the *Arctic*, or if he attempted to signal! That means that there is a hostile vessel out there, and that Bruske has been talking with some messenger from her. I never thought he was a traitor and a spy!"

Jimmie thought the matter over for a long time, standing on the cold deck, and then awoke Frank, who growled and grumbled at being brought out of a sound sleep. The little fellow got the sleepy boy out on deck and opened one of the sliding doors, permitting a gust of wind to sweep the covered space.

"Listen, now!" he said. "Listen hard!"

"What's this all about?" demanded Frank. "Where's Ned and Sailor Green, and what do you want me to listen for?"

"You'll know in a second," was the reply. "There!"

The voice of the bell came over the Arctic waters again, striking the signals as before."

"Why, there's a boat out there!" Frank cried.

Jimmie checked him before he could speak again and warned him to remain quiet. The steam exhaust was now heard, and Frank sprang for his glass, hoping to be able to look farther out on the sea with its aid.

"Now," whispered the little fellow, "there is a villain on board. It is Bruske, an' he's been signalin' to that boat. I don't know how, nor why. Ned told me not to let him do it again, or to leave the ship. Do you get it?"

"I never thought it of him," was all Frank said.

"Now, I'm goin' to fix it so Bruske can't leave the *Arctic*," Jimmie hastened to say. "I'm goin' out there to that vessel in his boat!"

"You'll go to the bottom if you step foot in it!" exclaimed Frank.

"I guess you don't remember how I rode canoes in the Phillippines and logs on the Columbia!" Jimmie suggested.

"But that wasn't in Baffin bay!" Frank declared.

"Well, I'm goin'," insisted the lad. "Ned and Sailor Green have gone away in the *Boy Scout*, an' they can't get along without me! You help me get the kayak out, and if I can't ride her I'll come back."

"If you can get back!"

Jimmie was determined on having his way, and the kayak was brought up to the open door, Frank insisting all the time that the little fellow would be drowned.

"You're to watch Bruske if he gets up," Jimmie warned. "You heard what I told you! Don't let him leave the ship, and don't let him signal in any way. Ned said to sit down on him if he got fractious."

Jimmie lowered himself into the kayak.

In the meantime Ned and Sailor Green were pulling away against the Arctic drift. There were

breaking ice floes everywhere, but they managed to escape collision with them for a time. They headed the boat in the direction from which the signals had come.

As they advanced they heard the bell ringing, closer and closer as they worked their way along. Presently they came to a great mass of ice which effectually blocked their way to the west. The ringing of the bell continued, and they could hear the bump of spars against a deck.

Ned drew up at the edge of the ice and worked along until he reached a point where a finger of ice broke the sweep of the waves.

"The floe is breaking and grinding," he said, after waiting for a moment, "and we may be able to get along in a short time."

"Why are they ringing that bell?" asked Sailor Green.

"Because there is a boat lost in the fog, and the people on board the steamer are giving it direction. I believed from the first that a boat had visited the *Arctic*, and this seems to prove that I was right!"

There came a thunderous boom, followed by the sound of breaking ice—a sound which resembles the firing of a pistol as much as anything else.

"The floe is breaking up!" Ned cried. "Now we may be able to get closer to that bell!"

"If we can't get through the other boat can't, and that is one satisfaction!" Sailor Green declared.

"The other boat may not have encountered this floe," was the reply. "It may be above, or below, or on the other side of it."

"Anyway, it is lost," chuckled the other.

"We may be lost, too!" Ned remarked.

They sat for a long time in the boat, waiting for the floe to part and let them past. They talked little after this, for the wind was strong and the waves slashed the sides of the craft mercilessly, making conversation in ordinary tones almost impossible, close as they sat together on the rower's seat. Ned was thinking of the warm night in New York when the trip had been planned. He was wondering, too, if the forces which had proved so hostile at that time were now operating in Baffin bay!

After a time the ice cracked across with the reverberation of a cannon, and swung apart. Sailor Green was urging the *Boy Scout* into the lane of water thus provided when Ned interfered.

"Wait," he said. "The floe may close up again."

The cold air became more disagreeable—became cold with that awful, dead, penetrating,

chill which indicated the presence of icebergs. A grinding as of breaking worlds followed, and then the mass crunched together again, almost catching the prow of the rowboat.

Although unfamiliar with Arctic phenomena, Ned knew very well what had taken place. An iceberg had drifted against the floe and crushed the fragments together. Had they entered the lane of water their boat would have been crushed flat, and they themselves would have been caught in the crush.

They could see only a short distance because of the fog, but their sight carried far enough to show them that the floe was being crumpled before the pressure of the berg, crumbled and pushed up into great heaps.

"That was a close call!" Sailor Green shouted.

The signal bell now rang continuously, and something which sounded like a pistol shot was heard.

"The boat hasn't returned," Ned said, placing his lips close to the ear of his companion. "They are becoming anxious."

"There is a call!" cried Sailor Green, "and it can't be very far off. You must have heard it! A scream for help."

"I heard it!" shouted Ned. "The other

boat must have been caught in the floe! Hold the boat steady until I see if this rotten ice will stand firm under my feet!"

"You are never going on that treacherous mass?" almost screamed the other. "It will bear your weight, and the weight of a thousand like you but—"

CHAPTER VIII

LOST ON A CRUMBLING FLOE

Ned was out of the boat before the sentence could be completed.

"Come back!" Sailor Green wailed. "The ice will bear your weight, and the weight of an army, too, but it is likely to part at any moment and send you adrift! Come back!"

A cry of human agony came from the west, and Ned sprang off in that direction. In a moment he was lost in the fog. The last Sailor Green saw of him he was leaping from ridge to ridge—and some of the ridges were bumping about in clear water!

Guided by the cries of agony, Ned raced fast over the treacherous surface. The sounds did not seem to him to be far away, yet he ran until he had lost all direction, and was out of breath.

At last, he came to the spot he sought, and saw a sight which he could not forget for many a long day. The boat which the bell was calling had been caught in the lane of water when the iceberg had moved down upon the floe. It was crushed flat and half lifted out of water, being held in position by the pressure of the ice.

There were two men in the boat, and they

had been caught as they sat on the rower's seat and terribly mangled. The sides of the craft had been pushed together like the jaws of a vise, and the men had been caught between them!

Their bodies were free from injury above the thighs, but below that they were crushed between the planks of the boat. The space in which their limbs were compressed could not have been more than an inch in width. Bones, muscles, and flesh were mangled and ground together!

They stretched out their hands to Ned as he ran to them, but they were beyond the power of words. The shrieks of agony which had directed the boy to the spot were becoming fainter. It was clear that in five minutes their troubles would be over!

The boy knew that any attempt to get the unfortunate men out of their fatal position would be worse than useless, as the ice, pressing against the broken planks of the wrecked boat, held them beyond all hope of release, and any effort in the direction of rescue would only add to their sufferings.

The seamen tried to speak as Ned bent over them, but their words trailed off into moans of agony. The pressure of the floe was momentarily increasing, and the remains of the boat were being forced out of the crack in which it

had met its doom, the edges of the ice meeting at the bottom in the shape of the letter "V."

"Can't you give me your names?" asked Ned.

Again the men tried to speak. Again only moans came from their drawn lips. The scene was pitiful, nerve-racking, in the extreme, and for an instant the boy covered his face with his hands to shut out the sight of the white, despairing faces.

The bell which had been calling the men in the boat through the fog now ceased entirely, and there was a whistling of steam. It seemed to Ned that the vessel was already on her way, either in quest of the men in the boat or on her course, leaving them to their fate.

The pack was breaking to the north. A long crevasse was showing between Ned and the boat he had left. Realizing that he could be of no use whatever to the dying men unless he could summon their companions, the boy fired three shots and waited. The shots were not returned.

In a moment both sufferers seemed to be unconscious, and Ned was almost in the act of springing over the fast-widening crevasse when a murmur caught his ears. One of the men was moving his arms and his hand seemed trying to point out an inner pocket.

Ned bent over, tore open the fur jacket the

man wore, and reached a hand into a pocket set in the lining of the garment. There he found a small book, something like the account books in which workmen keep their records of employment.

It seemed to the boy that a look of satisfaction came over the face of the sufferer as he drew the book forth, held it for a moment before the eyes of the owner, and placed it in a pocket. Then, with a report like that of a giant canon, the crack which held the boat widened, the field to the south moving away, and the wreck and its inmates sank in the chill water of Baffin bay. That was the end of all things for the seamen. All their lives their footsteps had tended toward this watery grave beyond the Arctic Circle!

Ned now turned his attention to his own unenviable plight. The channel between himself and the boy was widening. The crevasse which cut the field into north and south sections was also growing in size. It seemed to the boy that the force of impact had solidified the north field with the berg, that the berg had grounded, and that the south field was drifting away toward the coast of Labrador.

Under the circumstances the boy could move in only two directions, to the west, in the direction of the vessel whose signals he had heard, or to the north, toward the iceberg. The *Boy*

Scout was some distance away, on the other side of a channel of clear water!

The fog was becoming more dense every minute. The atmosphere was becoming warmer which, the boy concluded, accounted for the fog. It did not now seem to be below the freezing point, and hardly that. Ned knew that at times in summer the thermometer marked 40 above zero in that region, and took courage from the fact.

Should he be obliged to pass a number of hours on the floe he would not be apt to perish with cold if he could keep his clothing dry. He had no idea how far away his boat was, but he believed that Sailor Green would be able to hear any signals he might send forth.

The steamer must have been some distance off, yet he had heard the steam exhaust, the bell and pistol shots. Surely the *Boy Scout* could not be as far away as the steamer had been. There were no more signals from the mysterious vessel now, and no evidences of progress.

Believing that he had traveled in a south-westerly direction from the rowboat, Ned walked north, toward the berg, and fired three shots at regular intervals. Sailor Green, he knew, had an automatic revolver with him, and so he waited in all confidence for a shot which should direct him to the waiting boat.

But no answering shot came. The wind was blowing from the east, and Ned knew that a shot from that direction would be carried a long distance—or the sound of it would—and so he became anxious for the safety of Sailor Green. Something must have happened to the boy!

The motor boat, he thought, lay to the northeast, and so he walked on to the north—he could not turn to the east because of the break in the ice—and fired his revolver as he went.

It seemed to him that he traveled northward for hours. The fog was growing in density and dampness. His signals were not answered. He felt himself alone in a world of white mist and, save for the grinding of the floes, of silence!

Finally, faintly and far to the southwest, the boy heard the bell of the mysterious steamer. Its direction was not that which he had noted before. Either the craft was sailing to the south, or the pack he was on was drifting to the north, which seemed impossible, as the set of ice in Baffin bay at that time of the year is usually to the south, except on the very edge of the Greenland coast, where the Arctic current, sweeping past Cape Farewell, follows the coastline up to Melville bay, and so on around Cape Alexander to the north of Jones sound, where it turns south again. It was in this southern drift that the boy ought to be.

As a matter of fact, the pack was pushing westward at good speed, under the impelling influence of the wind blowing off the mountains and glaciers of Greenland. As the boy learned later on, the steamer had dropped down to the south to escape being caught between the shore ice and the oncoming pack.

"Sailor Green might at least give a signal!" Ned thought bitterly. "He ought to know that I can never find my way back through this fog!"

But Sailor Green did not give a signal for the very good reason that he had already exhausted his supply of cartridges! The boat was caught in the pack, and being carried south in a wayward current! The pack on which Ned was traveling was a long distance to the west of it. The erratic Arctic current's line of demarcation was foaming between the *Arctic* and the pack!

The wind from the glaciers brought more fog, and the cannonading of the ice-breakers grew louder. No individual sounds could be heard, and the boy's view did not exceed a score of feet each way.

Still, in all the danger of the moment, Ned fell to thinking of the steamer which had sent out the boat to spy upon the *Arctic*. She might be the power set to rescue him from the peril he was in!

He even found himself considering what sort of a reception he would meet with on board! That the purpose of the voyage was hostile to his interest he had no doubt. No rowboat with honest men aboard would turn away from a vessel in that waste of waters as the wrecked craft had turned away from the *Arctic* after receiving the signals Bruske had undoubtedly given! Companionship was the rule north of the Circle, he knew, and any boat coming too near would naturally make her presence known to those on board the visited ship.

And Bruske? Had he forced his companionship on the boys in order that he might betray them? What course should he adopt with the boy when he gained the deck of the *Arctic* again?

Ned walked until his stomach began to ask for food, and then sat down on a block of ice and took out the little account book he had taken from the pocket of the dying sailor. Opening it, he saw that it was filled with writing in a coarse, round hand, such as schoolboys use in the temporary diaries!

The first page carried the name and address of the owner of the book, in printed letters, as follows:

"HENRY W. MARTIN, No. 44 Seventh street, New York."

"There used to be a club there," Ned mused. "I presume the man took the number from that."

The next page opened as follows:

"Shipped to-day on the steamer *Vixen*, bound for Lady Franklin Bay. I do not like the looks of the men with whom I am to be associated, but I have no choice. There is nothing else in sight for me."

Here followed a few lines of purely personal matter, such as items of purchase. Then the writer went on:

"I fail to understand the mission of the *Vixen* to Lady Franklin Bay. No member of the crew I have talked with knows why she is going north. It is my private opinion that she is a pirate!"

There were several marks indicating the man's amazement and uncertainty (! ! ? ?) and then the writing went on:

"The commander of the *Vixen* is certainly a peach! He talks half a dozen languages and swears fluently in all of them. There are men of all nationalities on board, from Danes to Japanese."

Ned did not finish the reading of the book because the ice was breaking under his feet! The pack seemed to be scattering, and he wished devoutly that he was on board the *Arctic* so that progress to the north might be made.

The floe he was on seemed to be a small one, for it tipped this way and that. Besides being small in surface, it seemed also to be thin, for no thick block of ice is so easily moved up and down. In fact, the boy believed that he was on a piece of ice not much better than a frail raft, and that it was likely to break into fragments at any time!

There was still no indications of the whereabouts of the *Boy Scout* or the *Arctic*. There was no show of animal life anywhere save now and then seabirds fluttered their wings above the boy's head.

The fog continued to increase in density as the wind died down. The grinding of the ice, the sharp reports of parting fields, the wild calls of the birds were the only sounds heard for a long time.

Then there came another sound, not far away, and more threatening, under the circumstances, than any of the others! Ned listened intently, hoping that his ears had deceived him.

While he waited the floe tipped frightfully as if from the weight of a huge body creeping too close to the edge! Then the sound came again—rasping, distinct, murderous!

Ned knew it to be the snarl of a polar bear, imprisoned on the same floe as himself! In the fog the figure of the beast was not discernable,

but Ned knew the location of the animal by the sounds which came from his throat and by the tipping of the ice!

Instinctively the boy reached for his automatic, forgetting that he had exhausted the supply of cartridges in making useless signals! He returned the weapon to his pocket and drew out his electric searchlight. He might, at least, be able to keep the brute at bay with this!

But the chief danger was not from the bear. In truth bruin seemed to be in fear of his sailing companion. He kept to the outer edge of the cake, as far away from Ned as it was possible for him to get.

But this was the peril! The danger of the cake breaking into fragments was greatly increased by the position chosen by the bear. If the brute would only keep in the center, the floe might remain whole until help came!

But bruin was not inclined to court the acquaintance of the boy, not being hungry at that time. He paced along the edge of the floe, as Ned knew by the scratch of his claws, until the dreaded break in the floe came.

CHAPTER IX

THE CAPTURE OF A SPY

When Jimmie lowered himself from the deck of the *Arctic* to the kayak he rather anticipated a wetting. It did not seem possible to drop down into the waist-hole of the uncertain craft and lash the jacket he wore to the frame around the opening without capsizing.

But fortune favored him. By clinging to the side of the *Arctic*, he brought the kayak into position in a temporarily clear sea and crouched down, settling himself in position for the fastening to be made.

Here he would have failed if a drifting bit of ice had not interposed between the native boat and the side of the *Arctic*. He laid his long paddle across the ice, made the fastening and looked up to Frank with a wrinkling of his freckled nose.

"How's that?" he cried.

Frank threw a life-preserver over the side.

"When you tip," he said, "catch hold of that. The kayak will fill and go to the bottom. Then I'll hurl you a line and draw you aboard."

Jimmie balanced the paddle so that the blades hit the water on either side as his unsteady

motions tipped the kayak, and wrinkled his nose once more.

"You watch me!" he cried.

"I will as long as you are on the surface!" taunted Frank.

The voice of the bell came over the water, and Jimmie dipped a blade and sent the kayak forward a little. He was unsteady in his seat and the craft tipped violently. But the paddle served to keep it in upright position until a wave struck the bow and almost turned it over. The spray, dashing into the boy's eyes, blinded him for a moment.

"Better come back!" Frank cried.

"I'm going to fight it out now!" came back on the wind, and then the kayak disappeared in the fog. The warning bell still sounded.

Frank felt a hand laid on his shoulder and turned about to find the interpreter, Bruske, standing by his side. The boy's face was convulsed with rage as his eyes followed the direction the kayak had taken.

"Why has he taken my kayak?" he demanded.

"I guess he's taking his first lesson," Frank replied, calmly. "You promised to give him lessons, you know!"

For a moment Bruske controlled himself, then he burst out in ungovernable anger.

"He'll lose the boat and get drowned! He had no right to take it!"

"No?" asked Frank, getting angrier every moment.

"No, no, no!" shouted the interpreter. "Do you hear that bell? If I had the kayak now I might go to the rescue."

"Perhaps Jimmie has gone to the rescue!" Frank suggested.

Bruske turned sharply about and looked over the deck.

"Where is Ned?" he then asked.

Frank pointed out to the fog.

"Somewhere in there!" he said.

"And where is Sailor Green?"

"With Ned."

"And they have left us without any means of leaving the *Arctic* should she get fast in the ice!"

"It seems so!" Frank observed, noting the white heat of wrath the other was in, and knowing that it was not because of the lack of means to escape that troubled him.

"They have gone to find the boat—the boat making the signals?" Bruske asked, directly.

"No," replied Frank, looking the interpreter squarely in the face, "they have gone out to find a boat which visited us recently by stealth."

"How do you know that?" asked Bruske, his eyes shrinking.

"Sailor Green saw the signals."

"Signals from some boat out in the fog—signals to us?" Bruske faltered. "That is strange!"

"No!" answered Frank. "Signals from this deck to some boat out on the sea! Do you know anything about it?"

Bruske stepped back and made a motion as if to draw a weapon. Frank was unarmed and turned quickly toward the cabin. It was evident that the interpreter considered himself a match for Jack and Frank and Harry! Once in possession of the boat the cruise would come to an ending! With Ned out on the sea in the fog, Sailor Green with him, and Jimmie out in the kayak, with the three on board under his gun, he could sail back to Upernavik, leaving the three to their fate!

Frank caught the danger and dropped to the deck, as he believed that it was the intention of the spy to relieve himself of the presence of those still on the boat by plain murder. He saw the rascal's hand come out of a convenient pocket and saw the flash of a weapon.

Then there came a shot, accompanied by a cry of agony, and the sound of a weapon clattering to the deck. Bruske lifted a broken right

arm with his left hand and hopped about the deck in pain.

Harry Stevens, carrying a smoking revolver in his hand, stepped forward and lifted the interpreter's weapon.

"Why did you shoot me?" demanded Bruske, between cries of pain and fright. "You have broken my arm!"

"You're lucky that I didn't break your neck!" Harry said.

"I never meant to harm Frank!" howled the sufferer.

"Well, you had him covered with a gun when I shot," Frank answered.

Jack came out of the cabin on a run and was not slow in taking in the situation. What he did not understand was soon explained to him by Frank, while Bruske moaned about the deck, complaining that he would die without the aid of a surgeon.

"And you played traitor, did you?" demanded Jack, facing the shrinking interpreter. "You're no Boy Scout! I don't believe you ever were!"

"Honest, I was!" insisted the other.

"Then they fired you out for being a snake instead of an honest boy," Jack went on "What do you think we are going to do with you?'

Bruske made no reply, but cowered down on the deck, the nerve all out of him. Jack moved over to Harry.

"Can we set his arm?" he asked. "We ought to be able to accomplish a little job of surgery like that, after all the first aid to the injured instructions we have received.

"We surely can," Harry replied, "though if the bone is splintered we may not make a very good job of it."

"Try!" urged Bruske. "For God's sake, fellows, try! Don't leave me in this agony! Don't you see that I'm bleeding to death?"

"We ought to chuck you overboard!" Frank commented.

"Don't!" wailed Bruske. "Set the break and I'll tell you all I know about this incident! I know a lot!"

"We wouldn't believe anything you would say!" Harry answered. "If we should act on any information received from you we'd get into trouble."

The wounded boy was taken back to the cabin, the surgical trunk opened, and in a short time, after many howls of agony from the patient, the broken bone was set and the wound dressed. Then Frank took a pair of handcuffs and fastened the interpreter to his bunk by attaching one

link to his left wrist. Bruske groaned but made no comment.

"It isn't safe to trust you about," Frank said. "I believe you'd murder us all if you got a chance! You're poison, Bruske, just poison."

All this accomplished, the three boys gathered in the cabin for consultation. The long absence of the others was making them anxious.

"Where is the boat you signaled to, Bruske?" asked Frank.

The other inclined his head toward the west.

"Chasing us up, I suspect?"

The question was answered by a nod of the head.

"What will they do to the boys if they are obliged to seek shelter on board their steamer?" asked Jack.

"I don't know," was the reply.

"No use to talk to him," Harry cut in. "He's only a poor fool of a spy, and doesn't know what is being planned. The question now is this:

" 'Shall we lie here and wait for the boys, or shall we try to push on through the fog and ice and find them?' "

"Is it a sure thing the boats went west?" asked Jack of Bruske.

"If they followed the bell they did."

"They followed that, all right," Jack said, then.

"Suppose we push out to the west a little?" said Frank, tentatively.

"And run a chance of missing them!" Harry exclaimed.

"I guess we can make noise enough so they won't miss us!" laughed Jack, "and they can signal with their guns. What a little dunce Jimmie was to wander off in that kayak!"

"I couldn't stop him without tying him down!" Frank said. "I'll go the next dinner at Stuart's on Broadway that he comes out of it all right. There's no such thing as losing that kid! Listen!"

"Three shots!" Jack announced.

There came a short silence, then three more shots were fired. Ned was signaling from the floe! No more shots were heard, for the wind was strong when the last of the boy's cartridges were fired!

It was finally decided to try to work through the pack to the west, and so make the distance to be traveled by the boats shorter. Frank got out his gun and fired several shots, but, as is already known, these were not heard by Ned.

The *Arctic* did not penetrate the icefield readily. There was a movement to the north which seemed to carry her along, accompanied by great blocks which ground together like tumbling boulders.

Eagerly the boys listened for some signal from the fog, but none came. They were more anxious for Jimmie than for Ned and Sailor Green, but had strong hopes of his final rescue.

"If he was in any kind of a decent boat!" Frank said, "we might have confidence in the luck which always follows him, but even good luck can't protect a kid out on an arctic sea in a contraption like that!"

"How would you like to see the aeroplane we sailed over Peru come fluttering out of the sky now?" asked Jack.

"I think we might get along with the motor boat all right if this fog would let up. Never saw anything like it!"

The *Arctic* continued to press steadily through the pack, but at no great speed. At the same time she was making toward the north. Presently a call came from the west, and the next moment the kayak shot into view out of the fog.

"Where you fellows goin'?" demanded Jimmie. "Goin' off and leave us here for the bears?"

"Have you seen Ned?" asked Frank.

"I have not," was the reply, "but I can tell you that you won't see him, either, unless you turn and run south. The ice pack over there where the steamer was is floating south. If

Ned went near her he is going toward the Battery this minute!"

"Have you been over there?" asked Jack.

"Sure I have! Say, this is a bun of a boat! I'm going to have one just like it!"

"Come aboard!" shouted Harry. "We've got something to show you."

"I'm a rhinoceros bird!" called Jimmie. "I'll fly on ahead and point out the way. I can go where you can't. But turn south and west right now if you want to find Ned and Sailor Green."

"Can there be two opposing currents in the bay here?" asked Jack.

"Sure!" answered Frank. "The Arctic current turns back at Melville bay, and runs back off the coast of Grinnell land. I told you about that a long time ago."

The boys peered into the fog to get another glimpse of Jimmie, but he was out of sight. They heard a shot, however, and understood that he was giving them direction, so they turned the boat and ran toward the south and west.

They had great difficulty in forcing their way through the pack, although they were sailing with it, but kept bravely on. Jimmie seemed to be having better success in the kayak, for the

signals he gave came constantly at greater distances.

The fight with the ice drift seemed to last for hours, but in time they saw the kayak just ahead, with the little fellow signaling to them with his paddle. The boy dropped astern and was, with no little trouble, taken on board. Then the kayak was hoisted up.

"There Ned is," Jimmie said, as he reached the deck. "He's ma, agine editor of a menagerie. Look at the bear!"

"Why didn't you land on the floe and help him?" demanded Frank.

"I couldn't get the kayak through to him," was the reply. "I called out a thousand times, but the ice is breaking and he couldn't hear me, I guess. Besides, that congealed raft has about all the weight it can stand now, I take it."

"Did you see him before you came back to the boat?" asked Harry.

"I should say not. I only knew the direction of the drift when I started out to hunt you up. I've just sighted Ned."

"But where is the *Boy Scout* and Sailor Green?" asked Jack.

"Search me!" answered Jimmie.

Ned heard the clatter of the motors and turned away from the bear, now approaching him in a threatening manner. The floe and the *Arctic* were now not more than fifty yards apart, the space between them being filled with pack ice.

"We've got to ram the ice," Frank said, "and let Ned take a jump."

CHAPTER X

CLUES IN A SNOW CAVE

"Don't ram it hard," Jack advised. "If you do, Ned'll get a soaking."

"Turn the prow when you get most to it," Jimmie suggested, "and then you won't break the floe and let him through."

"Great head!" grinned Harry.

"Hello, Ned!" Jimmie called out. "Are you goin' to bring the bear on board? We need another guest!" But Ned did not hear.

The *Arctic* scraped the edge of the floe as she turned and Ned sprang for the open side door, landing half way inside.

"Fine catch!" laughed Jimmie. "Did you get wet, Ned?"

"I'm dry and hungry," was the reply. "The bear is hungry, too, but he behaved beautifully."

"Why didn't you shoot him?" demanded Jack. "There's another good rug gone to waste!"

"I spent all my ammunition trying to wake you boys up!" Ned replied. "Have you seen Sailor Green?"

The lads regarded each other anxiously.

"I left him in the boat when I went on the floe," Ned explained, "and then I lost my direction, and the ice drifted and cracked, and I couldn't find my way back to him. Here! What are you going to do?" he added, as Harry leveled a revolver at the bear.

"Acquire a rug!" was the reply.

"Let the bear go!" advised Ned. "He's a good sort! We traveled together in perfect peace—not a cross word between us!"

Harry lowered his weapon with a laugh.

"If this keeps on," he said, "we'll never get a rug for the Black Bear clubroom!"

"He was getting ready to mix with you when we came up!" urged Jack.

"But he didn't," Ned answered. "So we'll let him go. He'll have the time of his life getting off that rotten ice, anyway. How did you boys happen to find me?"

"Oh, Jimmie stole the kayak and went out on a joy ride!" Harry grinned. "After a time he came back and said we'd never find you if we kept on in the course we were going. He explained about the two currents, you see. Then he shot out and piloted us to you."

"Jimmie will never stay put," Ned admitted, "but he usually turns up in the right place at the right time!"

Ned said no more on the subject at that time,

but the look in his eyes told the little fellow as plainly as words could have done that he knew that the adventure with the kayak had preserved his life.

"And now about Sailor Green," Ned said anxiously. "I left him in the drift going south, so he must be somewhere near here."

"If the fog would let up!" Jack complained. "But it won't; it never does when it can make trouble."

"You're a false prognosticator," Harry observed, as the Arctic sun showed through the fog. "The wind will clear this out in no time if it gets a chance. It has been blowing it off all along, but it has also been blowing more on! But if the sun breaks through the clouds the mist from the glaciers will fade away, leaving a clear sea."

This estimate of weather conditions proved to be the correct one. The sun came out of a bank of clouds and the mists which had been rising from the glaciers of Greenland vanished. In ten minutes the sea was clear, save for a line of fog in the direction of Grinnell land.

Then it was that Jimmie uttered a vigorous catcall and pointed to the *Boy Scout*, with Sailor Green rowing for dear life!

"Go to it!" yelled the little fellow. "We'll

see that you get in the 'Varsity crew next year—if the bears don't get you!"

The boys all pretended to consider the adventures of the afternoon as good sport, but they knew that both those on the boat and those on the ice had been near to death. Nothing of the events on board the *Arctic* was said to Ned until he had told the story of the wrecking of the steamer's boat and the death of the two sailors. The boy did not refer to the little book he had taken possession of, preferring to master its contents before saying anything about it.

"And now," Frank said, pointing to the manacled figure on the bunk, "go and ask Bruske what his game was?"

Ned looked astonished, but the story was soon told, Bruske sitting defiantly with his face as hard as the ice in the bay.

"You tried to steal the boat?" asked Ned.

There was no answer.

"And you would have murdered the boys?"

Bruske frowned and looked at the floor.

"Tell me this," Ned went on. "Did you come on board as a spy?"

"I was sent here," was the surly answer.

"By whom?"

"I can't tell you that. Now, answer me a question. Did the steamer pass you, going north?"

"No," Frank broke in. "It got caught in the drift and went south."

Bruske considered the answer for a moment and then said:

"Then the game is up, and I may as well tell you that your lives have been in danger every minute of this voyage."

"Before you came on board?" asked Ned.

"Yes; any time the steamer got up ahead of you she would have landed men on shore, at the first favorable point. These men would have called to you for assistance, and you would never have left the landing place. You would not have been murdered, understand, but you would have been left on the shore to die of cold and hunger."

"The people on board that steamer must be cheerful gentlemen," Jimmie broke in. "I'd like to meet them on the Bowery!"

"What are you going to do with me?" asked Bruske, after further explanations had taken place.

"I think," Ned replied, "that we'll put you off at Cape York."

"To live there the remainder of my life? I would rather you would shoot me."

"You can shoot yourself if you want to!" Frank exclaimed, remembering the attempt the interpreter had made on his life.

"There are whalers passing the cape all through June, July and August," Ned went on, "and you will be taken off before many days. You need the care of a surgeon, and may find one at Cape York."

Bruske groaned but made no farther complaint. Jimmie declared afterward that the fellow showed in his face then the hope that he had not yet lost out completely.

"He expects his friends to get the *Arctic* yet," the lad declared.

The next two days were favorable to fast going. The sun shone brightly and there was little fog, save over the line of glaciers. The ice pack had shifted toward the west, and the *Arctic* made excellent time up to Cape York, which is where what sailors call "North water" begins.

The *Arctic* stood close in under Cape York and the boys kept a sharp lookout for signs of life on shore. Presently they saw a group of human beings making signs to attract attention, and Ned and Jimmie went ashore to ascertain what accommodations could be procured for Bruske, who made what the boys called a "great roar" at the thought of being put off the *Arctic*.

It was discovered that whalers were expected at the cape within a few days and that a surgeon was with the fleet, so the lads left the ungrateful interpreter on shore to take his punishment.

At Cape York it was learned that no steamer had recently passed north, unless the passage had been made silently and in a fog.

It was said, too, that the water was remarkably clear up as far as Cape Alexander, and Ned lost no time in getting under way. He was still a long way from Lady Franklin bay, and the season was passing rapidly.

The *Arctic* made a record run through Smith sound and Kennedy channel to Cape Forbes.

The distance from Cape York is not far from three hundred miles as the birds fly, but the winding channels more than doubled that distance.

In clear water, under good conditions, the motor boat could have made the trip in twenty hours. Fighting ice, fogs and wind and tide, she made it in three days. Cape Forbes is at 80, north latitude, and the boys realized that they were in the arctic country—although signs of spring were everywhere—whenever they stepped out of the cabin and the sheltered deck.

There is a channel running northeast behind Cape Forbes, and here the motor boat was anchored. To the north lay the barren waste of what is called Washington land by explorers, though modern geographers have given it various names. To the east lay the giant glaciers of Greenland.

To the west, across Kennedy channel, arose the massive mountains of the Victoria and Albert chain, back of these the barren fields of Grinnell land. It was in the channel behind Cape Forbes that the *Reindeer* had anchored and had been destroyed. The storehouse where Sailor Green had procured his supplies while waiting for release was built on a shelf of ice on the west side of the channel.

The first party ashore consisted of Ned, Jimmie, and Sailor Green. They found at first not a sign of life. Occasionally during the trip up they had encountered whalers making for Jones sound, but none had been seen for two days, as the fishers were now farther north. Contrary to expectations, there were no natives at Cape Forbes. Bears and deer had left their signatures on the snow, and even foxes were in evidence, but there was no live thing in sight as the boys stepped off the *Boy Scout* and advanced up the glacier to the old storehouse, which seemed to be still in good condition, not having melted the previous summer, being built of snow and blocks of ice cut from the glacier.

"We'll take on fresh game here, anyway," Jimmie said, as they crept up the gulley which ran down the face of the glacier. "I wouldn't mind a venison steak right now!"

"Where was the snow cave?" asked Ned. "Perhaps it has vanished."

Sailor Green pointed to the west of the channel.

"There," he said. "In that bank of snow! It will never melt there!"

"Is that the same cave?" asked Jimmie.

"It appears to be," was the reply.

Jimmie darted away and was soon seen to plunge headfirst into what appeared to be a solid wall of snow packed into a glacier gulley.

"I reckon he's found it!" Sailor Green shouted, following on in the track of the boy.

Ned stopped him with a word and asked:

"And the cairn? That is the point of interest just now."

"Just above the storehouse," Sailor Green shouted, making for the spot indicated.

In five minutes the boys stood beside the heap of stones which marked the tragedy of the *Reindeer*. Nothing had been disturbed, Sailor Green declared. The commander of the ill-fated vessel had found no soil to lay his tired bones in, but the ice of the Arctic world held them fast!

While the two boys stood beside the cairn, Jimmie came running over to them, his eyes large in his head.

"Say!" he called out, seizing Sailor Green by the sleeve. "Say, you come on over and take

a look at your old home. You can't tell me there has been no one in it since you went away!"

"Some animal may have visited it," the other said.

Jimmie drew a marine glass from his pocket.

"Did you leave that in the cave?" he asked.

Sailor Green took the glass into his mittened hands and looked it over.

"It is a new one on me," he said. "I never saw it before."

It was now Ned's turn to express surprise.

"Denton might have carried it?" he asked.

"No," insisted the boy. "He often wished he might have one, so that he might see what was going on on board the *Reindeer*."

"Where did you find it?" asked Ned.

"In the cave, and there's an oil lamp there. Did you leave that when you went away, Sailor?" Jimmie replied.

"The Danes who took me off robbed the cave of everything."

"Then they would have taken the camp and the glass?"

"Of course they would!"

"Then there's some one living here now!" exclaimed Jimmie. "Wonder if he is a Boy Scout?"

Ned laughed good naturedly at the suggestion and the three turned their steps in the direction

of the snow cave—built in a gulley in the icy mountain—where Sailor Green had waited three weeks for the vessel which had carried him back to civilization.

"I don't believe any one lives here now," Sailor said, as he stooped to enter the cave. "There are no tracks on the floor of the tunnel."

The Greenland ice cave is constructed at the end of a tunnel which is usually twelve feet long. In sheltered positions, at latitude 80 north, they sometimes last for years. The builder of the home forces his way into a bank by compressing and throwing snow out. When he has penetrated to the distance of from ten to twenty feet, he makes the room in which he is to live. The doorway and the tunnel itself are never more than two feet in height, so the occupants of this novel yet fairly comfortable home are obliged to enter on their hands and knees.

Ned examined the floor of the tunnel with his electric light as he advanced through it. Once outside the cave he faced his chums with a startled look on his face.

"The person who lives here now," he said, "saw us coming and scraped his footprints off the tunnel floor, but the marks of his hands are on the walls!"

CHAPTER XI

THE BOY SCOUT CASTAWAY

The boys stood staring at each other for a moment without speaking.

"The person who lives here now!" repeated Sailor Green, then, glancing about the interior of the cave, fairly well illuminated by the search-lights. "Why, no one lives here now! I don't believe there has been a human being here since I left, until today!"

"Then how did the lamp get here?" asked Jimmie, picking up a great block of stone into which a deep depression had been chipped or ground. The depression was half full of oil, and a wick of twisted moss hung over the edge of the stone, ready for lighting.

Sailor Green looked dazed for an instant, then he said:

"Why, it might have been left here, you know. I had one, taken from the *Reindeer* by Denton, which resembled that. I used it to cook on, and to keep me warm, after the boat was blown up,"

"Then you really don't know whether the Danes carried it away or not, do you?" Jimmie asked. "You're a queer one!"

"I was so excited about getting away!" pleaded the boy.

"I should think so!" Jimmie observed. "Think of being here, all stark alone, for—how long was it?"

"About three weeks."

"I'd 'a' had bats in me belfry if I'd 'a' been left alone that long," the little fellow grinned.

Ned, who had been listening in silence to this conversation, now began a minute inspection of the cave. There was nothing to be seen, at first, save the round hole in the snow. There were no bear, deer, or seal skins such as are used for rugs and bedding in such homes. There were no dishes of any kind.

And yet Ned did not believe that the place had been deserted ever since Sailor Green had been taken off by the Danish sailors. There was an air of habitation about it which is never found in a house long deserted. There seems to be some indefinable essence in the human presence which sets its mark on whatever it comes into contact with.

Besides, there was a more tangible thing for the boy to reckon from. It seemed to him that the lamp—the odd Esquimaux lamp—had not long been extinguished. There was no warmth to the wick, it is true, but there was an odor of burning grease in the air—a faint odor, certainly,

but not an odor carried there for more than a year!

"I don't like the looks of things!" the boy said, turning to Sailor Green.

"I'll guarantee there's been no one here!" responded the boy, who did not appear to like the contradiction Ned's methods implied.

"It is far better not to know so much than to know so many things that are not so!" Jimmie broke in. "What do you say about the cairn, Sailor Green?" the fellow went on. "Has that been touched?"

"I don't think it has."

"Are you as sure about that as you are that no one is now living in this cave?" asked Ned, with a smile.

"Well, I don't believe there's any one living here!" the boy insisted. "What would any one be living here for?"

"For shelter!" roared Jimmie.

"Still, you're not sure about the lamp?" Ned questioned.

"No, I'm not sure about the lamp."

"The only way to find out whether any one lives here," Jimmie cut in, "is to find out! What? We'll take away the lamp. No one can live long without that."

Ned looked thoughfully around the smooth walls of the cave. It was clear to Jimmie that

his chief had some sort of notion forming in his brain, and, as he was eager to know what it was, he was sorely disappointed when Ned asked him to go with Sailor Green to the cairn.

"When you come back," Ned instructed them, "I want you to tell me for certain whether the cairn has been molested. We have come a long way to look into the grave of Lieutenant Reis, and if it has been searched by others we are likely to go back to New York as lean as we came."

"I can tell for sure by digging down," Sailor Green said. "but it is frozen solid, so that will be a large-sized job."

"Do the best you can," Ned instructed, and the boys crawled out of the tunnel, Jimmie pausing now and then to look over his shoulder in an effort to see what his chief was doing.

After the departure of the lads Ned lighted the lamp and sat down by it. Then he took from his pocket the little book he had taken from the man who had died in the ice farther down.

"If everything progresses as planned," the boy read, "two of us are to be left at Cape Forbes, where there is believed to be some one waiting for us. Just how any one manages to survive in the chill of Cape Forbes is more than I can understand, but if there is any one there he must have been there a year or more.

"There is the same mystery aboard the *Vixen*. The commander is on the lookout every instant for a boat in the lead. The more I see of the goings-on, the less I like the job I have accepted. I hope that I shall not be one of the men chosen to remain at Cape Forbes.

"What are the men to be left there for? No one knows. The *Vixen* is bound for Lady Franklin bay! Very well! Why should she maroon two members of her crew at Cape Forbes?

"I heard the first mate saying today that the boat we sought was not far in advance. He said it was a speedy craft, and would soon distance the *Vixen* if clear water was reached. If this fog lifts, we may all be able to see what kind of a boat it is.

"Yesterday two men were sent out in a boat to reconnoitre in the fog. They returned and reported that communication had been established with the *Arctic*, a motor boat bound to the open Polar Sea! Of course, the officers have known all the time the name and destination of the craft ahead, but the others know now for the first time.

"The commander announced today, that a rowboat would be kept in commission most of the time, the purpose being to watch the *Arctic*, and asked for volunteers. Out of curiosity

I volunteered. If I make myself well and favorably known to the commander, I may be able to escape being left at Cape Forbes! It doesn't seem possible that there is any one there, in waiting for the *Vixen*, but it is stated positively that there is!"

That was the end of the record. The poor fellow had gone from the writing of his diary to his death. Ned put the book away with a sigh. Then he did a thing which Jimmie would have called "dippy." He began talking to the bare walls of the cave!

"You may as well show yourself!" he said.

It was terribly still in the cave. Save for the spluttering of the moss lamp wick, there was no sound at all.

"Because, you know," Ned went on, "we know that you are here, and that the *Vixen* expects to find you here."

Only dead silence followed the words.

"I don't know what part of the drift you are in," Ned went on, speaking easily, and as if the person addressed sat before him, "but I have a notion that you made your additional room farthest from the door. Anyway, I'm going to scatter a few bullets about the walls. Perhaps you are asleep and need the sting of lead and the smell of powder to waken you!"

Again the frigid atmosphere brought only

silence. Ned took his automatic from his pocket and fired one shot, directing it toward the roof.

The result of this was not long in coming. A square block of ice to which snow had been frozen was pushed out of the east wall, and a pair of fur-clad legs came squirming out of the opening thus revealed!

"That's better!" Ned said.

When the body to which the legs were attached came out of the tunnel Ned saw that it was a very small one. It was wrapped closely in furs, and the hood attached to the back of the jacket was drawn down to the end of the nose. Opposite the ears were two long slits through which twinkled a pair of blue eyes!

"Take it off," Ned commanded. "I want to see what you look like."

"This ain't your house!" came a boyish voice.

"Is it yours?" asked Ned, with a start of surprise.

"Of course it is mine!"

"Take off the hood!" Ned ordered again.

The other complied, revealing the face of a boy not over fourteen years of age. His hair was as red as Jimmie's, his nose a snub at the end and his blue eyes as impertinent!

If Ned had viewed a ghost on the drawing off

of the hood he could not have been more surprised.

This boy might have gone to sleep in Stanton street, New York, and awakened here! He certainly did not belong in Greenland! There was no trace of Esquimaux in his talk or in his features!

How, then, had he reached this spot—far beyond the Arctic Circle? Were there others about? Was this the person mentioned as waiting at Cape Forbes by the unfortunate man who had died in the ice?"

"Where did you come from?" demanded Ned.

The red-headed apparition grinned—like Jimmie, for all the world—and pointed to the hole in the wall.

"Are there any others here?"

"Not a soul," was the answer. "What do think this is? A block of Jew houses next to Attorney street?"

"So you come from New York?"

"Sure—New York the Good!"

"How long have you been here?"

"Something over three months!"

"All alone?"

"Oh, I've had a bunch of foxes, dogs, and a few bears, and a couple of reindeers for company."

Ned eyed the boy with a twinkle in his eyes.

He certainly was a nervy little fellow! And Ned liked his independent way!

"What's your name?" he asked.

"I wouldn't ask you that," was the provoking reply. "I know what your name is!"

"You knew me in New York?"

"In the Wolf Patrol."

"I see," laughed Ned, as the boy gave the full salute, " and you are a Wolf, too!"

"Of course. I was the only wolf in Greenland until you and Jimmie McGraw came!"

"How do you know Jimmie is here?"

"I heard him talking. You don't suppose you can keep that little monkey still, do you?"

"I never have!" Ned replied. "But you haven't told me how you came to be here! What a life you must have led!"

"I've had a pretty good time," was the reply. "There's still plenty of oil in the storehouse, and there's meat enough for a thousand years!"

"Have you seen no one in all that time?"

"Just one man! He was here only a week ago."

"Ah!" Ned said, wondering if the one man had touched there to prepare the boy for the coming of the *Vixen*, to warn him not to permit any one to molest the cairn under which Lieutenant Reis lay.

"What did this one man want?" asked Ned.

"He wanted me to watch the cairn—to shoot any one who tried to monkey with it. Then he left me some ammunition and went away, saying that I would be taken off before long. He wouldn't let me go with him."

"You wanted to?"

"Yes; I was tired of it. I expected to stay here only a week or so when I sneaked off the ship and hid, and I expected to find another boy here, too."

"What other boy?"

"The other one with you—Sailor Green!"

"What ship did you sneak off from?"

The *Dane*, the one Sailor Green went away on."

"You thought another whaler would be along in a few days?"

"Yes, I thought I'd have a picnic here for a short time, and I wanted to get even with the captain of the *Dane*, who ought to have had his head punched every morning before breakfast and every night after supper. He's a rough neck, that feller!"

"And so, when Sailor Green moved out, you moved in!" laughed Ned.

"That's what! It was lonesome sometimes, but it was a cinch that a boat would come along this summer an' take me back to the little old Bowery!"

"You didn't tell me your name," insisted Ned.

"Bill! Bell Dennis, for short! I'm French!"

"The name suggests French blood," Ned observed.

"Did Sawyer come with you?" asked Dennis, in a moment.

"Who's Sawyer?"

"The man who hired me to guard the cairn. You see, he was sent here to do that, but he found me here and went away in the same boat he came on. I guess he came on purpose."

"Why didn't he go through the cairn and take away whatever it was he wanted you to guard so carefully?" asked Ned.

"He was afraid!" was the quick reply. "Besides, he didn't even know what was wanted, or why it was to be guarded."

CHAPTER XII

A BOY SCOUT'S MENAGERIE

There was a snicker in the long tunnel leading to the interior of the Arctic home, and then a voice was heard shouting:

"Old Bill Dennis! Old Bill Dennis!"

Dennis made a rush for the tunnel, and directly rolled out on the floor, with Jimmie and Sailor Green on top of him. After the boys had rolled over the snowy surface of the interior, kicking flakes of the white deposit into their hair and eyes, for a time, they sat up and began rubbing their faces with handfuls of snow.

"Why didn't you tell me?" asked Dennis, in an indignant tone.

"Tell you what?" asked Sailor Green, to whom the question was addressed. "What could I tell you?"

"Why didn't you tell me you were goin' back on the *Dane*?"

"Huh, think I could stand here an' yell that 'way down to Chatham Square? The climate has got under your crust!"

"I left the *Dane* to find you!" Dennis insisted. "A man came on board an' said there was a boy from New York on the cape, an' I

knew that it must be Sailor Green, as no one but you an' me would be crazy enough to come up to this God-forsaken country. So I went ashore to see you, an' you must have gone on board while I was hidin' from the sailors."

"So you're the kid who run away here? They told me about the cabin boy leaving them. They thought he was dead!"

"If we should go to the North Pole," Jimmie said gravely, but with a twinkle in his eyes, "we'd find a Boy Scout sittin' on top of the Pole. They're as thick as kids around Tompkins Square! We've found 'em in Mexico, an' the Isthmus of Panama, an' the Philippines, an' China, an' wherever we've been!"

"What you all doin' up here?" asked Dennis.

"We came up after the Pole," Jimmie answered. "Wood is gettin' too expensive in New York."

"Now, about this man Sawyer who hired you to watch the cairn," Ned said, going back to the conversation interrupted by the arrival of the two boys, "you say he told you not to permit any one to molest it until he returned. Is that it?"

"That's what he told me."

"Well, we've come here to dig into it," laughed Ned.

"Then I'll have to pinch you all!" grinned

Dennis. "I'm the cop on the job! You'll get run in if you look at the cairn!"

"How did Sawyer get here?" asked Ned.

"Came off a whaler."

"And went back on the same boat?"

"Yes; he went aboard her, anyway."

"And the boat went south?"

"She went north first, then south. I tried to signal her when she went south, but she wouldn't notice me."

Here was another puzzle for the boy to solve. Where had the man taken the whaler? How had he been instructed concerning the cairn? It must have been by wire, for he could not have received instructions from the men who were pursuing the *Arctic* in time to get up there before the arrival of the Boy Scout party.

Now, where could he have received a message? There were no wireless stations along Baffin bay that Ned knew of, so the dispatch must have been received at Upernavik. And it must have been received about the time the *Arctic* left New York! The man had made a quick trip!"

The men who were opposing the mission of the Boy Scouts certainly were doing a pretty good job at it. They had managed to get a spy on the motor boat, and had also succeeded, as they thought, in protecting the Reis cairn

so that no one save themselves could delve into it!

The enemies of the expedition, however, had made several mistakes. The spy they had sent aboard the *Arctic* had betrayed himself by lack of caution, and the man sent on ahead to see that the cairn remained untouched had betrayed his trust, placing his errand in the hands of a small boy rather than remain in that desolate country until his friends could come up. These mistakes had proved fatal to their hopes so far.

"Come on in an look at my bachelor den!" Ned heard Dennis saying to the boys, and so he crept through the inner tunnel and came into the annex to the big cave. It was indeed a cozy little den.

The walls, ceiling and floor were covered with bear skin rugs. There was one ventilator in the ceiling, and, this being open, it was now quite cold in the "retiring room," as Dennis termed it. The boy pulled a corner of a rug over the opening, lighted a large stone lamp, and the atmosphere began to warm rapidly.

"What do you think of it?" he asked.

"I'm goin' to stay here an' be mayor an' chief of police!" Jimmie declared. "What's the use of hustlin' for grub when you can get it out of a storehouse that will never run dry?"

"Two or three might have a gay old time

here," suggested Sailor Green, mediatatively.

"You haven't got enough of the North yet?" asked Ned.

"I like it because there's no one to crowd you!" Sailor went on. "I guess there ain't no danger of any money panic here, either."

"You may have the joint!" proffered Dennis. "I'm goin' back to the Bowery an go to all the movies on the street! I've got a pet bear an some foxes, an' a dog to take back with me, too!"

"Where is this menagerie?" demanded Jimmie. "You've got to show me. Produce the wild animals!"

"Perhaps," Ned suggested, "we'd better go back to the boat and give the others a chance to see this wonderful residence!"

"I'll stay here an' show 'em," said Dennis.

"An' I'll stay with him," Jimmie said. "I want to see what kind of a menagerie he has."

Ned and Sailor Green hastened back to the *Arctic*, where they found Harry, Jack, and Frank half wild with expectation. Ned explained something of the situation on shore, and the boys set out over the loose ice, which had drifted in between the motor boat and the land.

"Perhaps you would better tell Jimmie and Dennis to come on board, as soon as the latter has shown you the sights," advised Ned. "We

are all going to get a good rest tonight, and tomorrow we shall set out for Lady Franklin bay—if the cairn investigation develops anything!"

"What do you expect to find there?" asked Harry.

"Such a record as an angry man would leave," was the reply. "According to all accounts, Denton was at war with the people of the *Reindeer*, long before the commander was killed. After that event took place, he hated every person on board, as the blowing up of the ship shows."

"And he did the Sampson job," Harry interrupted. "He threw down the gates of the temple and perished with the others! Only he blew up the gang with dynamite instead of pulling down a temple. There wasn't any old temple to tear down, you know!"

"I am not sure that he perished with the others," Ned observed, "but that is not the point now. I believe that he knew something of the purpose of the expedition to Lady Franklin bay, and that he told something of it in writing and left it in the cairn!"

"Just to spite the others!"

"Exactly. Just to spite the others. Now that I have told you what I hope to discover in the cairn, those who care to, better run along, look over the landscape, and get back on board

as soon as possible. You'll find Jimmie and Dennis in the cave. I shall be right along."

But when the boys reached the cave Jimmie and Dennis were not there.

It may be well to state here, what the reader has probably guessed before this, that Jimmie and Dennis had had no notion, at the time of the departure of Ned, of remaining quietly in the cave until the arrival of the other boys. Jimmie liked to find out things for himself, and to get to any desired position or solution in advance of his chums.

"Now," the little fellow grinned, as Ned and Sailor Green set out for the *Arctic*, "now we've got time to see that menagerie. 'Member the times we've stood in front of the cages at the Central Park Zoo and wished we were in some wild place—just for the fun of the thing?"

"You bet I do," was the reply.

"Then lead me to the wild animals!" the other cried.

"There was a round elevation on the opposite side of the channel which cut into the ice behind Cape Forbes, and to this Dennis now pointed with a mittened hand.

"I keep my menagerie closer to me, usually," he said, "but when I saw the *Arctic* comin' I got the component parts thereof out of sight. I didn't know what kind of people would be on

board, and I didn't want my stock killed. I'll bring the bunch back in the morning."

The boys crossed the channel, between the cape and the main land, covered with floating ice, as the warm season was advancing, and soon came to the elevation to which the lad had pointed.

"They're behind that," he said, "in a stockage built of snow."

The two took bravely to a climb up an incline of thirty degrees and soon passed around a shoulder of the rise—which was only part of the glacier—and came to a level valley in the ice. The mountain of ice hedged the valley in on two sides, and on the other two were heaped high banks of softening snow. Inside were half a dozen sledge dogs and, peering from secure positions, were half a dozen foxes, some white, some the color of a Maltese cat. Jimmie sat down on the ice and held his sides with his hands.

"What's the use of buildin' that snow wall?" he demanded.

"To hide the menagerie," replied Dennis. "Think I've got a box-office with a ticket-seller at one corner—like the Coney Island layout? I thought sailors who landed, if any ever did, might take a notion to the dogs."

"Where did you get 'em?" was the next question.

"They must have run away from some Esquimaux camp," Dennis replied. "Anyway, they came snarlin' around here during the polar night, savage an' hungry, and I fed 'em. I've had a lot of fun with 'em."

"Got a sledge?" queried Jimmie, his face showing excitement.

"A kind of a sledge," Dennis laughed. "I built it, an' made a harness out of hides, I've been exploring with 'em!"

Jimmie regarded the pack curiously. The great, muscular animals came bounding up to and over the snow embankment at sight of the boys. They leaped all over Dennis, but sniffed suspiciously at Jimmie.

Dennis took scraps of dried fish from a capacious pocket and fed them from his hands. They snapped at each other, but fawned gently on their master. One, the leader of the pack, insisted on laying his great head against the boy's face, or that part of his face which was visible between the edges of his fur hood.

The foxes edged away, keeping nimbly out of reach of the dogs, except a little white one who seemd to be a favorite with the big brutes.

"Where are the bears?" was the next question Jimmie asked.

Dennis chuckled and pointed up the glacier.

"They won't show themselves when the dogs are making a row," he said. "I had three, an' the dogs chewed one up not long ago. If I didn t keep the dogs fat an' contented they'd run down the other bears in no time."

"Why don't we go out for a ride?" asked the little fellow.

"Why, the other boys will be here soon."

"Let 'em wait!" Jimmie replied. "What's the use of coming up to the Arctics if we don't have any fun?"

"We'll have to get over to the glacier if we want to have a sledge ride," Dennis declared. "You don't see much hard snow about here do you?"

Then, for the first time, Jimmie realized that it was almost June in the Arctic country. He sensed that his furs were too warm. He also saw that his companion was throwing back his hood and opening his jacket.

The spring had fairly set in. Ned had hurried away from New York in order to reach this point when the ice was breaking. He was still somewhere near 250 miles from Lady Franklin bay, but the chances for getting there were excellent. This is the season of the year when explorers who have wintered in Smith sound get ready for their invasion of the distant north

The temperature was not much below freezing and the water was everywhere encroaching on the ice. The snow was giving way under the rays of the sun, and water was pouring down the hillsides. It seemed to Jimmie just out of the cabin, that Nature had undergone a transformation scene since he had fought his way to Ned in the kayak.

There were many signs of a returning vegetation. Even though the roots of the willows were covered with snow and ice, the sap was starting in the stems. Poppies, mosses and the hardy plants were beginning to sprout. Almost in an instant, as it seemed to the boy, the scene became filled with bird and animal life.

In the bright sunshine, proclaiming their greetings to the spring, were little auks, eider ducks, terns, gulls and many species of birds the lad knew nothing of, including snipe and sparrows. Seal lay basking in the sun, and the call of the walrus came from the ice-rafts out in the channel. The change had come with marvelous suddenness.

"Well," Jimmie said, after looking about, "you'll have to make your dog fence out of something besides snow before long. I thought it was always cold and wintry up here!"

Then the boy saw Ned at the cairn and ran down to him.

CHAPTER XIII

A BATTLE WITH WALRUS

When Jimmie gained the cairn he found Ned and Sailor Green busy at the frozen heaps with picks. Naturally the spaces between the stones were filled with ice, and so the covering of the grave was one solid mass.

Presently Jack and Dennis joined in the work, and the stones flew fast. Harry Stevens and Frank Shaw were still on board the *Arctic*, watching, with great interest, the seal tumbling about in the sunshine and the walrus calling from their ice-rafts farther out.

After a couple of hours of hard work, during which the boys had little use for furs, the stones were removed, and the hillock of earth where the murdered commander of the Reindeer had been buried was in sight. Only for the staunch covering of rocks, the grave would have been entered by wild beasts long before the burial party had met the fate in store for it through the vengeance of Denton.

It was hard digging below the stones, too, for the ground was frozen as hard as it was possible to freeze, but at last the body of the unfortunate man lay revealed, still wrapped in

the furs in which it had been consigned to the grave. Ned and Dennis lifted the body carefully and laid it out of the shallow excavation.

Ned had been looking, all along, for some packet or bundle in the heap of stones, but none had been found. The body was now out of the grave, but nothing of the kind was in view.

"Denton probably placed his record somewhere else," Jack said. "That is, if he left any record at all."

"I am sure he did," Sailor Green declared. "He was writing something for a long time, and he was away from the cave for many nights. On one occasion I saw him working at the cairn, and the next morning the snow above it was loose, as if it had been moved in the night."

"Why didn't you ask him about it?" asked Jimmie.

"I didn't ask him about it, for I was half afraid of him and his surly ways, but I suggested that the bears had been at work on the cairn."

"What did he say to that?

"He just grunted out some indistinct reply."

"He couldn't do all this digging without your knowing it!" Jack suggested. "He must have put his writing in some other place."

"Yes, he could have done all this work without my knowing anything about it," insisted

Sailor Green. "I wasn't watchin' him. I was in the ice cave most of the time, when I could get away from the boat."

"And you never saw him after the *Reindeer* was blown up?"

"Never. I think he was killed, too."

While this talk had been going on Ned had been making an investigation of the body itself. Reverently he unfastened the fur jacket which the lieutenant had been interred in and looked inside.

Immediately his hand came in contact with a packet wrapped in silk. He drew it forth, examined the fastenings, and slipped it into his pocket without inspecting its contents.

Further examination of the grave and the body revealed nothing more, so the body was restored to its last resting place and the cairn piled high above it. Additional rocks were also brought and placed on top of the cairn, to make certain that no hungry beast should break into the chamber below.

The boys watched Ned eagerly as he pocketed the packet. No one said a word for a moment, and then Jimmie broke the silence:

"Is that what we came up here for?" he asked.

"It may be," was the reply. "At least there is nothing else of the sort here."

"Then open it up an' find out!" advised the boy, with a grin.

"I'm going to the cabin for that purpose now," Ned replied. "And, as I shall not want to be disturbed, you boys may as well take a walk over to the glacier. Only don't try to swim in any of the torrents running off it," he added, with a laugh.

Thus dismissed, the four boys were turning toward the glacier when a most unearthly noise, coming from the main channel, attracted their attention. Looking out on the sea, they saw that the tide was carrying a great ice-pack to the south, and that the ice was literally covered with bellowing walrus. There seemed to be thousands of them.

"Me for a hunt!" Jimmie cried, making for the *Arctic*. "Get your guns an' harpoons, boys, an' we'll get some of these ugly beasts?"

The ice-pack was some distance from the place where the motor boat was anchored, so the lads reached it by taking the *Boy Scout* out. Three hundred yards or more from the motor boat they came to a floating cake whereon at least a dozen walrus were tumbling about in the sunshine.

"The great big sea-hogs!" Jimmie cried. "I'm goin' to have that big one over in the middle."

"How are you goin' to get him?' demanded Dennis.

"Spear him!" was the short reply.

The "big one" referred to by the boy was at least fifteen feet in length and as thick as a barrel through the middle. His tusks seemed to be three feet long, and his flat nose was covered with coarse hair.

"Look at his whiskers!" Jack cried. "He needs a clean shave!"

Jimmie got ready to throw a light lance, but Dennis held his arm.

"Why not?" asked the little fellow.

"You might as well throw a pin at him," Dennis replied. "His skin is more than half an inch thick, and as hard as iron. You've got to use the big harpoon, an' wait until we are nearer to him."

"I'll take a shot at him," suggested Sailor Green.

"If you wound him fatally, you'll lose him," the other went on. "The only way to get one of them is to harpoon him and shoot him at the same time. The line will hold him to the surface, so we can get him."

The huge animals did not seem to be in the least alarmed by the approach of the rowboat. Probably they had never seen one before. They continued to stretch out in the sunshine

until Jimmie and Sailor Green made a concerted attack upon the big fellow with harpoon and gun.

As soon as the gun was fired, Jimmie and Dennis shot the boat ahead until the prow rested against the floe where the beasts were. The bullet took effect somewhere in the head, and the harpoon landed in the neck.

The astonished herd tumbled off the ice and made for the bottom, the harpoon rope running out as the big bull sank down. The water was very deep, for the coils were all out before the big fellow began to rise for a breath of fresh air.

Presently he was on top, and then the boat, breaking away from the floe, began doing tricks which were new to the boys. It swung this way and that, the prow ducked under almost to the rail, and then the craft swerved aside until it seemed as if it must overturn. Jimmie, holding tight to the line, then saw that it had fouled over the prow stern, and that he had hold back of the tie-up!

"Let him go!" the boy shouted. "He'll give us a ride!"

"Yes, an' he'll bump us into an iceberg!" cried Sailor Green. "He's makin' for the open channel now."

"Let him go!" exclaimed Jack. "I rather like this!"

The herd which had lain on the ice now dashed off to the west, following open channels where there were such and diving under ice when there were none. The *Boy Scout*, in unwilling tow, followed the lead of the great bull!

"Better cut loose!" advised Dennis.

"Not on your life!" answered Jimmie. "This is what we came up here for! What?"

Then the rowboat, propelled at great speed by the frantic walrus, came into head-on collision with a great ice cake, and Jimmie, who was in the prow, went right on, landing on the ice on his shoulders, the line taut in his hand—taut because it was secured in the boat!

For a moment the boys believed that the little fellow had been seriously injured by his fall, but he was on his feet directly, shouting to his chums to hang on to the line.

The strain on the harpoon line was great, but it held because the ice continued to give a little as the boat pressed against it. The great bull was now at a standstill, or nearly so, and, as Jack expressed it, he played his last trump!

He sent up a bellowing which almost shook the air! He roared to good effect, too, for in

a second the whole herd of walrus, perhaps a thousand in number, gathered around him. They came from every direction—from neighboring floes, from the bottom, and from behind high drifts.

But they did not remain with the wounded brute long. Their sympathies were expressed in short order, and the whole herd made for the boat!

"Here's where we get it!" shouted Dennis.

"Get your guns out, boys," Jack cried. "We'll get tipped over if one of them gets near enough to throw his tusks over the edge of the rail!"

"Shoot for the eyes!" Sailor Green added. "You may kill some in that way and frighten the others.

"Here comes the General! Jimmie yelled, as a monster came almost up to the gunwale. "He's the boss of the precinct! See me get him!"

The lad was still on the ice. He stepped close to the edge, and fired every bullet in his automatic into the open mouth of the monster. The brute was instantly killed and went to the bottom immediately. Then the others began to draw away.

"I told you he was the captain of the pre-

cinct!" Jimmie shouted. "He is dead and they've gone away to elect another boss! Suppose we get out of here before they come back?"

"They won't come back!" predicted Jack. "Anyway, we've got one."

The bull at the end of the line pulled hard in his endeavors to follow the herd away, but the line held and the fact that the boat was held by the ice made it all the more difficult for him. At last he gave up, and was hauled in and towed to the *Arctic*.

"What is he good for?" Jack asked.

"Good for my dogs!" Dennis answered.

Then the story of the menagerie was told to all on board, and the boys decided to visit the dogs as soon as they had eaten.

"What about the bears?" asked Harry.

"Oh, they'll have some, too," replied Dennis. "If we keep quiet tonight—or when we call it night—an' go to bed, they'll come down to the shore an' eat everything left of the carcass. If I don't stuff the dogs first, though, the bears won't dare to come."

"You must have had a pleasant time with your menagerie!" Ned laughed.

"Oh, I've enjoyed it!" was the reply. "I had nothing else to do. One or two dogs were devoured, but the bears caught foxes and seals so they kept good an' fat!"

"Caught seals!" Frank exclaimed. "How do they catch seals?"

"Like a cat catches a mouse!" grinned Dennis. "They lie by the hole an' grab the seal when he sticks his head out to breathe. An' bears get fish in the same way!"

While the boys were busy cooking and eating Ned was poring over the papers found in the grave, but he said little to the others regarding his impressions. His face was grave, and his manner showed anxiety. When the boys started away after dinner, he said to them:

"Don't remain away from the boat long! We must be on our way very soon! We are going on to Lady Franklin bay."

"Whoop—ee!" yelled Jimmie.

"Then you found something important?" asked Sailor Green.

Ned only nodded and went back to his inspection of the papers he had taken from the packet.

The boys were away like a pack of hunting hounds. There was still plenty of ice backed up along the shore, so they did not have to use the rowboat in order to effect a landing. The channel back of the cape, too, was still covered with floating ice.

The five boys—Frank having remained on board the *Arctic* with Ned—clambered up the

shoulder of the glaciers slowly. It was hard work, for water was pouring down in places, and in other places great blocks of ice dropped away when they grasped them for support.

"We ought to have a boat to cross this mountain in!" Jack declared, as he slipped and sat down in a little torrent which swirled in the path. "I never saw a man climb before in running water!"

After a long and tiresome journey the boys turned the shoulder of the glacier and looked out on Dennis' "menagerie!" The dogs were barking and snarling, as if excited over something not pleasant to the senses. They devoured the walrus meat brought them, but did not fawn for more as they usually did. Instead, they ran here and there about the yard and sniffed the air.

"I never saw them act in that way before!" Dennis declared.

"They want to get out," suggested Jack.

"They can get out if they want to, all right," was the reply. "That snow wall wouldn't hold 'em a second. They stay in there only because they are too fat an lazy to leap out."

"Where are the bears?" asked Harry.

"We'll see them in a minute, if they smell the dogs eating," Dennis answered. "They'll come stickin' their noses around that peak."

"I see a furry head stickin' up there now!" Jimmie cried.

Jack took out his field glass and turned it on the corner indicated.

"That may be a bear!" he said, after a long look, "but it looks to me like one of the hoods the Exquimaux wear on their heads! "

"Then there's some rank outsider sneakin' around here!' Dennis cried.

"I had an idea," Harry contradicted, "that there wasn't a human being within 500 miles of us."

"The Esquimaux are not that far off," Dennis replied, "but I had no notion they were within speaking distance!"

"Is that what ails the dogs?" asked Jimmie.

"The dogs would act in that manner if there were strange dogs near them," was the reply.

"I'm goin' to run up there an' see who it is!" Jimmie volunteered.

"Suppose it is a bear, after all!"

This from Harry, who was himself moving forward.

The lads passed around the peak and came to a ledge of ice which gave them a fairly good view of the place where the furry head had been seen. There was no one there! Tracks showed that there had been fur boots on the

remnant of snow which lay over the exposed peak.

"I'll go a dinner at the Astor that the man Denton is still alive!" Jimmie declared. "No native ever made those tracks."

The boys looked off to the east with the field glass, but, though they looked down into a valley between them and the next peak, they saw no one. The ice glittered in the sunshine, trackless!

"Look here," Jack called out, presently. "See the campfire!"

"Nix for the campfire—nothing to burn!" This from Dennis, as he took the glass into his hand.

"Say," he said, then, "there is a column of smoke! Wait!" as Jimmie reached for the glass. "There are two of them!"

Jimmie took the glass and looked.

"What do you think of that?" he asked. "Boy Scout signals up here."

"What do they say?" asked Dennis. "I've forgotten all I ever knew of Boy Scout lore. What do the signals say?"

"They say," Jimmie answered, "that the signaling boy is lost. Two columns of smoke say: 'Help! I'm lost!'"

CHAPTER XIV

THE RECORD IN THE CAIRN

When the boys left the *Arctic* to visit Dennis' "menagerie," Ned settled down in the cabin to a leisurely yet eager reading of the papers found in the packet taken from the cairn. Frank Shaw worked about the deck for a time and then entered the cabin and seated himself expectantly near Ned.

"What is it all about?" he asked.

Ned frowned slightly and read on for ten minutes, then he tossed the papers on the table and turned to Frank.

"It means trouble!" he said.

"We expected that!" grinned Frank. "We came up here for the excitement, you remember."

Ned looked thoughtful for a moment, and then picked up the papers again. He turned a couple of sheets and read:

"I blew the *Reindeer* up a week ago. I am sorry I was obliged to do it. I tremble with horror when I think of that night, yet it was the lives of those murderers or mine!"

"Then Denton saved himself! He was there after the boat went down?"

"So it seems," Ned replied. "I suspected this."

"But why didn't he make himself known to Sailor Green?"

"Because he did not wish to stand trial for mutiny and murder on the high seas! Sailor Green knew that he blew up the *Reindeer*, and would have told the story, in spite of all promises to the contrary."

"Of course! That's easy!"

"By waiting for another vessel, Denton thought he might be able to get away without his act of murder being conveyed to the outer world with him. Sailor Green would believe him dead, and no one would ever know."

"Of course!" repeated Frank. "Go on."

"The boy," Ned read, "does not know that I am here. I must keep away from him. I must even wait for the second ship to come, if he goes away on the first one. When I go into the world again I must go under a new name and begin all over again. The Denton who sailed on the *Reindeer* is dead to the world."

"I should think he would want to be, after murdering all those men," Frank interrupted.

"But see what comes next," Ned said, reading.

"Today I went over the glacier into a little valley there is to the east. The sun shows at

noon now, but there was a fog, and was so dark that I came near falling into a chasm. I heard the babble of dogs after I crossed into the valley and went on over an icy path to a depression farther on. There I saw the light of an oil lamp shining through the drifting snow. Several Esquimaux live there. I hastened away. I wonder if they have just arrived, or if they were here when the *Reindeer* was destroyed?"

"That's an easy one," Frank put in.

"Easy? Why?"

"If they had lived there when the *Reindeer* was blown up, they would have been attracted by the explosion, and would have rushed to the scene. In which case there wouldn't have been an ounce of provisions left in the storehouse."

"He reasons it out in that way later on," Ned replied.

"What next?" asked Frank. "My, how lonesome he must have been!"

"Today," Ned read on, "I came very near to being seen by the boy who was asleep in the cave when the vessel was destroyed. He came into the storehouse while I was there, and I hid behind a heap of vegetables which were covered with furs and with snow on top of that."

"I think he might have trusted Sailor Green!" Frank observed.

"He didn't know him as well as we do."

"What else?"

"I visited the Esquimaux encampment today, without being seen, of course. To my dismay I saw there, from a distance, two men who were on the *Reindeer!* I don't know what to think of it! They could not have been on board on that awful night! They would have been killed! I suspect that, because of the deviltry on board, they ran away from the vessel and joined the band of Esquimaux before that last riotous week! In that case they do not even know that the ship has gone to the bottom! If they come out to the coast they will suppose, naturally, that she has sailed away. She might sail away now, as it is coming spring, and there is a channel out to the middle of the main one."

"Reads like fiction!" Frank exclaimed. "Go on."

"Here follows a long period between entries," Ned said. "The explanation is that he has been sick, and had been obliged to move into the store house for greater warmth."

"After a long illness," the boy read on, "I visited the vicinity of the Esquimaux camp again today. The first people I saw were Dan Ryan, an old arctic explorer, and Gil Sweeney,

a young man, not over twenty-one, a chum of Dan Ryan's. They were pretty decent to me on the *Reindeer*, and I wish that I might make myself known to them. But to do that would be to put my own neck in a noose if I ever get out."

"He's right leary of his own life!" commented Frank.

"Murderers usually are," Ned remarked, dryly.

"Well, what does he do?"

"I watched the camp a long time today," Ned read on, "and have arrived at the conclusion that the Esquimaux are going away. I wonder if Ryan and Sweeney will go with them? If they should come out here, that might be bad for them, as well as for myself!"

"Still murderous!"

"Today I discovered that the Esquimaux have gone—where, I have no idea! Ryan and Sweeney have gone with them. Again the boy and myself are alone. To speak correctly, I am alone, for I dare not seek the companionship of the lad, much as I would like to."

"I think I would have risked it," commented Frank.

"I have just finished rebuilding the cairn," Ned read, in a moment. "I have concealed the papers giving an account of the reason for

the trip to the north. If the body of Lieutenant Reis is ever found, as it must be if the boy ever gets away, I want the world to know that he was murdered, and that the murderers were the guests of the commander. I believe it was the intention of these men to kill him from the first. He knew too much. When I have finished my journal, I shall open the cairn again and put this with the other papers."

"He made himself a lot of work," Frank grinned. "What next?"

"The papers covering the ship's mission to Lady Franklin bay come in here," Ned replied, "but I will talk about them at another time."

"I'm interested in Denton. He's such a crafty murderer! Go on with his account of himself!"

"His journal tells of the wait for spring, of the taking off of Sailor Green, of the arrival of Dennis, and of his waiting and hoping for another whaler to come."

"And one came?"

"The record does not say so. His last entry tells of sickness, and declares that he is weary of the long wait. It is Bill Dennis he is afraid of now. He does not mention him very frequently after he records the departure of Sailor

Green, although Dennis stepped off the ship that took Sailor away."

"That's strange!"

"It seems that Denton was ill most of the time. How he managed to live I don't know. The last entry says that he is too feeble to continue the fight for life. That he will place the journal in the cairn and go out to the bay and seek death in the sea is the last word."

"And do you believe he did?"

"I do not."

"You think he wanted the journal to show that he died so as to make it safe for him to go out under a new name?"

"Yes, that is about it."

"Well, why did he put his confession in the journal?"

"He is a boaster!"

"What's the answer to that?" asked Frank.

"He wants the world to know that he took a terrible revenge for the murder of his commander."

"I see. He thinks the men who planned the murder are high up, and he wants them to know that Sailor Denton was wise enough to get even with their tools?"

"Correct!" laughed Ned. "Strange what

risks a man will take to gratify a crooked vanity. That journal will hang him yet!"

"Then you think he will be found?"

"I think he will."

"In the old world, where he is unknown, probably," Frank suggested.

"I should not be surprised to find him here, or at Lady Franklin bay," Ned asserted.

"But how would he get to Lady Franklin bay?" asked the other. "I can't even see as he would gain anything by going there."

"And yet a ship was fitted out to go to Lady Franklin bay and bring back something buried there," Ned laughed.

"And you think Denton would want to get that?"

"He might have a motive in getting it, for it might protect him!"

"If I only knew what it was," laughed Frank, "I might give a guess as to whether he would or not."

"I think I know what it was," Ned said, thoughtfully, "but I'm not going to talk about it until I know whether I do know or not!"

"If Denton is anywhere near here," Frank observed, "the boys may see something of him out on the glacier."

"If Denton is here and does not want us to meet him, he probably knows of places where

he can hide while we are searching for him. If he wants us to see him—and is actually here—he will make himself known in some way."

"It is the strangest thing I ever heard of," Frank said, after studying for a moment. "Sailor Green thought himself alone here, but he wasn't, and Dennis thought he was all alone, but *he* wasn't, either! Denton was here with Green and with Dennis! And there were the Esquimaux not far away! If Dennis had only known, he wouldn't have been so lonely."

"He declares that he found plenty of amusement with his dogs and his bears!" Ned replied, "though I think there must have been dull days for him. It is a wonder to me how he ever endured it!—three months!"

"Sailor Green was soon taken off, Frank went on, "but Dennis was here alone, so far as he knew, for what must have seemed to him a long time."

"There was no help for the lad," Ned suggested. "He just had to stay here! It does seem to me that Denton ought to have taken chances and made his presence known. A man of keen intelligence would have denied the crime he committed and sought the companionship of the boy."

"Oh, yes, but Sailor Green knew, and Sailor Green was out and away. No, Ned, Denton

just had to remain hidden and give out the impression that he was dead. Otherwise there would have been no safety for him!"

"It is a wonder he didn't finish his job by murdering the boy," Ned said. "But we have studied over this long enough. The boys ought to be back before long. According to Dennis' story, this menagerie he speaks of is not very far away."

"I'll go out and see if they are in sight," Frank volunteered.

The lad was gone from the cabin only a short time before he came rushing back with his face showing strong excitement.

"Come on out and look at the dogs!" he shouted. "Dennis' menagerie has broken loose, I guess. Anyway, there are a lot of dogs rushing down the glacier. Something has happened to the boys!"

There were half a dozen sledge dogs sweeping down toward the channel, but they made so much noise, barking, snarling, and fighting, that there appeared to be a score of them. The boys were not in sight.

CHAPTER XV

THE LOST EXPEDITION

While the five boys, Harry, Jimmie, Jack, Sailor Green, and Dennis watched the two columns of smoke with puzzled eyes, the signals died down—as if fed by insufficient fuel.

"It may just be a coincidence," Harry observed.

"I don't believe it," Jimmie insisted. "It is a sure-enough Boy Scout signal."

"I think Jimmie is right," Dennis urged, "for Esquimaux do not build fires out of doors, so far as I have ever seen. They heat their tents and caves with oil lamps, like the one in my cave, and cook by them, too. They are signals, all right!"

"But where would the fuel come from?" demanded Harry. "There is no wood here, and oil, burned with a wick, would not make a smudge like that."

"Anyway," Jimmie persisted, "if I had something to burn I'd make a camp signal and see if there came an answer."

The boys began searching their pockets for matches, paper, or anything which would make a temporary blaze. The result of the investi-

gation was a handful of matches, a number of old letters, and several yards of cotton cloth, carried to be used as bandages if occasion made the binding of wounds necessary.

"We might build one fire with that mess," Harry observed.

"But we ought to say 'GOOD NEWS,' or 'COME TO THE COUNCIL,' and one requires three columns of smoke and the other four," Jack said.

"You boys are all right, but you don't know how!" laughed Jimmie. "One column of smoke will say, 'THE CAMP IS HERE!' and that is enough."

"It is a good thing Solomon is dead!" grinned Jack. "He wouldn't want to have a person around who was wiser than himself!"

Jimmie wrinkled his freckled nose at the speaker and proceeded to make one heap of most of the matches, the old letters, and the bandages.

"Here's another piece of cloth," Harry pointed out, lifting a large bandage from the snow. "That will help some."

"Don't put that on now!" cried Jimmie, as the other was about to toss the cloth into the flame which had just been started. "It would burn up in a second, and there wouldn't be any

smoke. Guess you've forgotten your forest lessons!"

When the fire blazed up a little Jimmie took the cloth and rubbed it in the snow until the fibers were well filled with it, then he held it in front of the growing blaze until it was very damp from the melting snow. Then he repeated the process with the result that in a moment it was almost wringing wet.

The fire was blazing up finely now, and would last only a moment more, so the lad folded the wet bandage, laid it on the fire, and placed a little snow on top of it. The result was a dying down of the blaze and the lifting of a straight, slender column of smoke!

"There!" Jimmie cried. "That tells 'em the camp is here! If they want us, let them come across—or make another signal!"

"You make me amusement!" Harry laughed. "As Old Franz, the French jockey, used to say, 'It is to laugh!' Here you are trying to coax a Boy Scout out of an Arctic waste!"

"We've found two Boy Scouts since we started on the trip," Jimmie returned. "If you want to find hens, look where hens are being found," he added, with another grin.

"He's calling you a hen, Dennis!" Harry laughed. "Hand him one!"

But Dennis was running toward the east—that is, running when he wasn't sliding or falling, for the slope into the valley was still very slippery.

"What's come over him?" asked Jack.

"There's a repetition of the 'LOST' signal!" shouted Jimmie. "Now we know there's no bunk about it. Come on, fellows!"

The boys raced down the incline, across a concave space where the snow still lay deep, and up the slope on the other side of the valley. When they reached the top of the elevation they saw where the fires which had produced the columns of smoke had been lighted.

There were still faint flickers of flame just beyond the divide, and close to them lay a figure which might have been, so far as they could see from the summit, that of a man, a boy, or a furry animal! It did not move as the lads rushed down to it, stumbling and sliding in their haste to solve the mystery.

"It is a man, all right! Jimmie shouted, "and he's about all in!"

"A man wouldn't know Boy Scout signals!" Jack observed.

"Perhaps it is a bear, then!" Jimmie said, scornfully. "But if it is a bear, it is the first one I ever saw with a clean shave!"

The boy raised the figure in his arms as he

spoke, and immediately a pair of blue eyes opened and closed again.

"Why, it is a boy!" Jimmie cried. "And he's here alone!"

"Pretty soon," Harry grinned, "this precinct will have sufficient population to need a member of congress. If we keep on finding Boy Scouts here, we'll have to form a new patrol—the Lost Boy Pat ol, it ought to be called!"

"What's the matter with the boy?" asked Jack, pointing to the figure on the ground. "Why doesn't he get up?"

The blue eyes open for an instant and a drawn smile showed on the white face.

"Broke my leg!" he said, and closed his eyes again.

"How did you ever get here?" asked Jack.

"Came up on the *Reindeer*!" was the amazing reply.

Sailor Green bent over the injured one and looked long and steadily into his face. The other met his gaze frankly—with a smile, in fact.

"You're Sailor Green!" the other said.

"And you're Gil Sweeney!" cried Sailor Green.

"So he did come up on the *Reindeer?*" asked Jack.

"Sure he did! But, look here, Sweeney, you're too old to belong to the Boy Scouts! What about it?"

"I belonged up to the time I was eighteen; now, I'm twenty-one!"

"What patrol?" asked Harry.

"Whoo! Whoo! Whoo!" was the answer.

"All right," Jimmie grinned. "He belonged to the Owl Patrol. Wonder you wouldn't 'a' let Sailor Green know about it on board the *Reindeer!*"

"I thought of doing so, but there was so much trouble on board, and there was so much fighting after the commander was killed and the spirits found, that I neglected to do it. Then Dan Ryan and I ran away and joined the Esquimaux!"

"Where is Dan Ryan now?"

"Dead! Fell down a crevasse."

"And you were working your way back to the coast, in the hope of getting a ship home? I see! Didn't you know that Denton and Sailor Green were here on the shore after the blowing up of the *Reindeer?*"

"We thought the *Reindeer* worked her way out of the ice!"

"She did," Jimmie answered, "but she worked her way UP! Good thing you left her!"

"Come," Jack put in, "we musn't let him

lie here long. "We've got to carry him back to the *Arctic*. Wonder how he came to think of giving a Boy Scout signal?"

"I was up on the summit when I fell," answered the other, faintly. "and saw you boys moving around. Here! Don't open that coat!" he cried, as Jimmie bent over him. "I burned up my cloth garments making those signals. I'm like a polar bear! Nothing to my back but a fur coat!"

The boys took turns making "a chair" with their hands, and the injured boy—or young man, rather—was soon on his way to the *Arctic*.

"You've been off into the interior with the Exquimaux?" asked Harry, who was one of "the legs" of the chair, as they walked along.

"Yes, we didn't like the idea of being anywhere near where Denton was."

Harry came near dropping the young man, so great was his surprise.

"You said you thought the *Reindeer* sailed away!" he said.

"We did; but we, Ryan and I, knew that Denton was here. We believed he murdered Lieutenant Reis and were afraid of him."

"You knew about the storehouse?"

"Yes, but we did not need to go there. The Esquimaux were good on the hunt. We had a pretty good time, but we never lost sight of

the coast for long, as we wanted to be taken off."

"Did you see Denton often?" asked Jack.

"Until he went away."

"Went away where?"

"He picked up some stray dogs, built a sledge, and went off to the north. The ice was bad, spring being at hand, and he may have been drowned. Then we were going to the storehouse to wait for a vessel, but the Esquimaux told us of an overland relief expedition in the interior, so we went away with them, returning only a day ago."

"You found an overland expedition?"

"Traces of one."

"Aw, give the lad a chance to rest!" cried Jimmie. "We can find out all about things after he has his leg set, and after he has a square meal. He's about all in!"

When the boys got back as far as the "menagerie," they found the dogs breaking out and rushing toward the coast.

"They're scared at something!" Dennis explained. "Either that or they scent other dogs. There may be other teams coming down from the north."

"Denton went north with a team!" Jimmie said, meaningly.

The dogs, wild beyond all restraint, swept

out to the *Arctic* and then turned away to the north."

"Good-bye!" Jimmie called to them. "Don't forget the number!"

"Something remarkable about that!" Dennis said. "I've never seen them act in that way before!"

"Denton may be coming," Harry ventured.

"What will he do when he sees a growing population at Cape Forbes?" Jack asked, with a smile.

"He'll keep right on going!" decided Jimmie.

"But he'll want to procure supplies," Harry declared.

"Yes, and he'll want to protect his neck!" Jimmie returned.

Ned and Frank joined the boys on the shore, and Sweeney was soon on board the motor boat, his leg set and his story told.

"I'd like to know something more about that lost expedition," Ned mused, after listening to his story. "The longer we remain up here, the more our adventures shape themselves like a Bowery drama! We have a vanishing murderer, a fresh acquisition to our party in the shape of an ex-Boy Scout, and a lost expedition. If this thing goes on, we're likely to find a long-buried city in the frozen north!"

"What traces of the lost expedition were

found?" asked Harry of young Sweeney. "Which way were the wanderers going?"

"Going north."

"What sort of truck did they leave behind?"

"Dead dogs and broken sledges—here and there a batch of empty tin cans. We followed them a long way north, far above the end of the glacier—until they turned west to cross the channel."

"Cross the channel toward Lady Franklin bay?" asked Ned, springing to his feet. "Did they cross in that direction?"

"Yes, they were trying to, and they were traveling fast, too, for their fires were a long way apart."

"But where did they come from?" asked Jimmie. "This surely gets my goat!"

"Suppose," Ned suggested, "that the steamer went to pieces in the ice back there. Suppose the members of the party, not liking to turn back, procured dogs and sledges and went on up the coast of Greenland, the idea being to cross Kennedy channel higher up?"

"Why do they call it the lost expedition?" asked Jack.

"Because they avoid all civilization; if Esquimaux camps and villages may be so called," Sweeney answered. "They just shoot ahead

like they didn't know where they were going, but were on their way!"

"That means," Ned decided, "that we've got to get under way. We are now, according to all accounts, about two days behind the lost expedition. Is that right, Sweeney?"

"Yes, I think so. I left the Esquimaux the day the lost expedition passed to the east of Cape Forbes, and that is two days ago."

"How fast can they travel, if there are few riders and plenty of good dogs?" asked Ned.

"Faster than you can go in the boat in that ice-blocked channel," answered the other. "If they are headed for any place you want to get at, you'd better be on the move!"

"Here's hoping they bump into Denton!" Jimmie exclaimed.

"Here's hoping they don't get to the cairn at Lady Franklin bay before we do!" Harry added.

"All we need is a clear channel!" Ned continued. "We can make the run to Lady Franklin bay in no time if we have a fair chance. If we only had Dennis' dogs, we might go on over the ice, if the field is still solid, and so gain time!"

"There seems to be plenty of dogs about except when we need 'em," Jack growled.

"We've got to make the fight in the motor boat!" Ned declared.

CHAPTER XVI

AN ALARM IN THE NIGHT

It was now June, and the Arctic summer was at its best. Now, if ever, Kennedy channel could be crossed to Lady Franklin bay, only two degrees of latitude away, in a boat. In about three weeks the days would begin to shorten again.

Just how the lost expedition folks would be able to cross with their dogs and sleds if the channel was open for the motor boat Ned did not stop to figure out. It was enough for him to know that a new element of hostility had to be met.

"What will happen if we get there too late to get what the cairn contains?" asked Jimmie, as the *Arctic* took to Kennedy channel again and put her nose to the northwest.

"That it is impossible to say," Ned answered, "but it is a sure thing that we would be badly beaten!"

"But what else?"

"War might happen!"

"War against the United States?"

"Yes, just such a war!"

"Then we've just got to get there first!"

the boy exclaimed. "But," he added, with a grave look, "suppose this Denton person has already been there? What then?"

"I can't cross this bridge until I get to it!" Ned said, with a hopeful smile. "We've got to hope for the best—AND KEEP GOING!"

"Anyway," Jimmie consoled himself, "it is always day up here now, and we can see the lost expedition chaps if they attempt to cross the channel anywhere near us."

It was late that night—by the clock in the cabin—when Ned went to bed. The boat had made slow progress. There were spaces where the water was clear of ice, and there were spaces where the floes had to be cut and pushed away, which was slow work, and discouraging as well.

Frank and Jimmie, left to keep the motor boat in motion as much as possible, sat on the deck with the shelter windows open. It was a night which would have been thought cold in New York, but which seemed to the lads, after the weather they had experienced earlier in the season, to be remarkably warm.

Birds were flying about in great flocks, and there were numerous seals sporting on the floating ice, reveling in the faint light of the sun. The night was a combination of winter and spring which awoke great interest in the minds of the boys.

"Look at the birds!" Jimmie cried, presently. "Why are they all going to the south? They were flying every-which-way not long ago."

"Something up there has frightened them" Frank suggested.

"Looks like it!"

The boys watched the flocks of birds for a long time, then Jimmie caught his companion by the arm.

"Listen to that!" he said.

Frank bent his head forward, in a listening attitude, but heard nothing save the clatter of the motors, the grinding of the ice, and the cries of the Arctic songsters.

"Nothing doing!" he said.

"You just wait!" the boy advised, turning off the power so that the distant sound he had noted might be more clearly heard, "and you'll hear something."

"But what is it?"

Jimmie did not need to answer. The answer came in a low, rumbling sound which seemed to roll down the channel from a long distance.

"There!" the boy said. "Do you know what that is?"

Before Frank could reply the sound came again.

"It might be a bear!" he laughed.

"Bear—nothing! That's dynamite!"

"Up there?"

"It ain't nowhere else!" Jimmie scoffed. "It is up toward Lady Franklin bay, too. What do you make of it?"

Then Frank saw by the alarm in Jimmie's eyes what the lad feared.

"It can't be that they are blowing up the ice!" he said.

"Yes, sir!" shouted the boy. "They are blowing up the floe above and shifting it down into clear water?"

"Then we'll never get up the Lady Franklin bay!" cried Frank. "What can we do about it? Who is doing it?"

"Well," Jimmie answered, "we know of only one person in these latitudes who has formed the dynamite habit!"

"Denton?"

"Sure! Denton!"

"But there's the lost expedition folks. They may have taken dynamite along with them!"

"Don't believe it! Denton is up there with the explosive, trying to do two things with it. He seeks to keep the lost expedition from crossing with their sleds, and also to keep us from getting up to Lady Franklin bay with our motor boat!"

"Well? I suppose we're going to lie right here and let him fill the channel so full of ice that we

can never get the *Arctic* through it? Is that the idea?"

"I'm trying to get some rescue remedy into my brain pan," Jimmie said with a grin, "but I don't find any comin' my way!"

Frank turned the power on again, and the motor boat went on up the channel, the water there being reasonably clear of pack ice.

"In half an hour," Jimmie said, "we'll be meetin' the ice that rough neck up above is tryin' to send down. If it comes in a mass we'll never get through it."

"Shall we tell Ned?" asked Frank, after a time.

"Of course not! Let him sleep! I guess we can do all that he can do! We've just got to figure this thing out!"

"Well," Frank argued, "it seems to me that there is just one chance for us. You remember what we talked about the Arctic current?"

"About its coming along the east coast of Greenland, around Cape Farewell, and so on up the west coast until it meets the current from Kennedy channel and Jones and Lancaster sounds and then turning south again, along the east coast of Grinnell land? Yes; I remember that."

"If this current keeps to the west from

Jones sound down, wouldn't that naturally draw the water over to that side up here in Kennedy channel? It seems to me that it ought to."

"It looks like a sure thing to me."

"Then the ice cut loose from above—if any is being cut loose—ought to swing over to the west with it, leaving a clear line of water close to the Greenland side!"

"Sure! Then we'll turn to the east and hug the shore of Greenland until we get about as far up as Lady Franklin bay. There we'll try to make our way across."

"You've caught the idea, kid!" Frank laughed, "and so, over she goes. Here's back to Greenland's icy mountain."

"At some time in the distant past," grinned Jimmie, "you must have attended religious services!"

"Certainly," Frank admitted. "I'm not a heathen!"

In about half an hour the pack ice made its appearance in great masses, showing the disturbance above, but it seemed to drift toward the west as well as south. It was well broken up and rather soft.

"If you leave it to me," Frank said, as the two boys stood on the deck looking out on the

great procession, "this is the summer year in Kennedy channel!"

"What do you mean by summer year?"

"I've read records of a great many Arctic exploring trips," Frank explained, "and they usually go on from Cape Forbes in sledges!"

"But the whalers get up here," insisted Jimmie. "I've read of them being in this latitude."

"Then it must have been during a summer year like this one."

"Well, the explorers who took to dog power north of Cape Forbes didn't have a speedy little motor boat like the *Arctic!* Some of them depended on sails, and the ones that carried propellers didn't have the strength as compared to bulk that our boat has."

"Anyway," Frank argued, "we're still going north in open water, and we can't be very far, now, from the place where that lunatic was using dynamite!"

Smith sound, Kane basin, Kennedy channel, Hall basin, and Robeson channel connect Baffin bay with the open Polar sea. The distance from Cape Alexander, at the lower end of Smith sound, to the open sea—or what is believed to be the open sea—is not far from 400 miles. Lady Franklin bay opens from Hall

basin, below Fort Conger, not more than 100 miles from the polar coast.

The *Arctic* could have made the run from Cape Forbes to Lady Franklin bay in a short time, with clear water, but she was obliged to fight ice every inch of the way. When Ned awoke he expressed himself as satisfied with the action taken by Frank and Jimmie and the boat continued up the Greenland coast into Hall basin.

Here the ice lay before the party in a great solid mass. There were no signs of dynamite. It might break later in the summer, but the boys could not afford to wait for that, as they were afraid of being caught lower down and being forced to winter in that frigid climate.

All that day the motor boat fought its way along at a snail pace. The ice resisted at every step. Great ridges lay on the breast of the field.

"We can't go another inch," Ned finally said, as they were seated around the supper table. "I've got to put a pack on my back and hike over to Lady Franklin bay."

"I wouldn't attempt to climb over those ridges for the entire state of New York!" Jack exclaimed.

"It will be fun!" cried Jimmie.

"I wouldn't miss it for anything! Frank echoed.

"I'll go, too!" Dennis declared. "We'll leave the others here and take a walk! We can make it in two days! Then it will take us two days to get back. We'll take fur sleeping bags, and live like bugs in rugs!"

All the boys, including Jack, objected to being left behind, but it was finally decided that only four should go—Ned, Frank, Jimmie, and Dennis, the latter because he was already hardened to the polar climate.

"You'll find Denton up there!" Jack predicted.

"And the lost expedition!" Sailor Green added.

"We should have seen Denton before this," Ned suggested.

"His dynamiting didn't amount to much, did it?" asked Jimmie. "We got along just as well with it as we could have done without it. I'd like to see him try to send this ice field down!"

"It would be some job!" commented Jimmie.

The packs taken by the boys did not average more than fifteen pounds each—a pound for each meal, Jimmie grinned, and a light sleeping bag.

The progress over the ice was slow, as the boys were obliged to wind around great ice cliffs and to climb those which they could not avoid.

This was new work for all of them, and so, after twelve hours of steady struggle, they made coffee on their oil lamp, and the supper set aside for that time, and, crawling into their fur sleeping bags, prepared for slumber.

Such a mysterious, roomy, breezy sleeping chamber no Boy Scouts ever had before! They lay between two great ridges of ice, jammed and pounded together at some distant time, with the clear, cold air of the arctics swinging in eddies around them. To the north the mysterious Polar sea, to the east the untraced the mysterious Polar sea, to the east the untraced mountains of Greenland, to the south the thrashing floes of Kennedy channel, to the west the line of mountains which marks the coast of Grinnell land!

And the Arctic sun was shining, too! It was night by the clock, but Nature had notions of her own about the division of time.

The boys were tired, and they slept soundly for a time—slept as soundly as if the only polar bears in the world were those in the Central Park Zoo, in little old New York! The first exhaustion brushed away by the rest, Ned awoke and the strangeness of the situation prevented his going to sleep again.

As he lay there a ringing report from the west reached his ears. It might have been the

breaking of the ice, though that was improbable, or it might have been the report of a gun—which seemed more likely, as Denton might be near at hand, or the members of the lost expedition might be attempting to cross to Lady Franklin bay.

As Ned stirred in his sleeping bag and sat up he felt a touch on his shoulder and Jimmie whispered:

"You heard that?"

"Of course."

"Well, there's a light over in the direction the sound came from."

"How do you know that?"

"I heard a sound like that a couple of minutes ago," Jimmie answered, "and crawled over so as to look around the ridge. There's a light there, not the sunlight, but the light of a fire. I could see the blaze!"

"How many people around it? asked Ned.

"I couldn t see; but if you get up and investigate, you ll see the lost expedition making for Lady Franklin bay. They might have been shootin' at Denton! There's doings, Ned! Come along!"

CHAPTER XVII

A LOST PIECE OF "PIE"

"Wait," Ned said, as Jimmie started off over the ice, "we may as well wake Frank and Dennis and take them along with us. There is no need of our coming back here at all, so pack up your luggage."

Frank and Dennis were soon out of their bags and ready for the journey. Ned pointed to a headland off to the west.

"There is the southern projection of Lady Franklin bay," he said. "We ought to get there in a few hours. I'm afraid that the others have beaten us to it."

"Judging from the sounds we heard?"

"Yes, and from the fact that they had a long start ahead on us."

"Do they know where to find the cairn we are seeking?" asked Frank.

"That is just what I'd like to know," Ned answered.

"Well, they've doubtless mixed by this time," Jimmie grinned, "and perhaps they have each other all laid out! If they keep on fightin', they naturally can't find the cairn."

"What's in it?" asked Frank, with a wink at Jimmie.

"That's the great secret!" answered the boy. "No one knows, save only Ned, an' an oyster is a busy talker compared with him when we come to the subject."

Ned laughed, but made no reply to these sly remarks. He was walking a little ahead of the others, his head bent in a listening attitude.

"I'll tell you right now," Jimmie went on, "what those noises were. Denton is tryin' to bust up the ice in Lady Franklin bay so the lost expedition can't enter on their sledges!"

"Go on and read the future, little man!" laughed Frank.

"An' Denton'll have a fine time doin' of it!" the boy continued. "If he thinks he can send enough ice down to block the passage of the Arctic, or make an open space in the bay which dog teams can't go around, he's got more guesses comin'. I'll bet a pie—a hot apple pie—that the packin' is loose in his dome, anyway!"

"Jimmie!" laughed Frank. "Haven't I often told you, me son, not to talk slang? You've got a kid patter than makes Bowery slang sound like a section of the psalms. You ought to quit it!"

"I'm glad you never talk slang!" Jimmie retorted. "S-a-a-y! What has Ned found

now?" he went on, excitedly, dashing forward.

Ned was holding a slip of brown wrapping paper in his hand.

"I found it on the ice here," he said, as the boys came running up. "It means something, but I can't make it out."

"Do you think it was left here for us?" asked Dennis.

"It was left here for some one," Ned answered. "for it was in an open place and was weighted down with a piece of ice."

"What does it say?" asked Frank.

Ned looked up with a smile and passed the paper over to the boy.

"Read it and tell us what it says!" he answered.

The lads all roared as Frank read it aloud:

" 'Happy Hooligans — Unicorn — Ram Race —Ram Race—Yoemen!' "

"What do you know about that?" demanded Frank.

"Looks like they need a foolish house up here!" Dennis commented.

"Wait for wisdom from Jimmie!" Ned advised with a smile. "If you note the sudden lighting of the freckles on his nose, you'll imagine that he has an idea! What is it, Jimmie?"

"You'll all be fired out of the Boy Scouts when you get back to the village of New York!"

the boy exclaimed. "You've forgotten your 'rememberable Myer!' Now read it!"

"It is like a city directory," Frank put in. "I can't keep the run of the subject. Do you know what it says, Smart One?"

"Of course I do!" was the reply.

"Then interpret!" Frank suggested. "We're waiting."

"Happy Hooligan, H; Unicorn, U; Ram Race, R; Yoemen, Y. There's two Ram Races. Now, what does it spell?"

"HURRY!" shouted Frank. "I remember now! That is from the illustrated page in the official handbook which tells how to remember the Myer wig-wag code! Now, who wants us to hurry?"

"For the love of Mike!" exclaimed Jimmie. "Is there another Boy Scout up here? The writing says so! It is a Boy Scout who wants us to hurry! Say, me rivets are comin' loose, with all this mystery."

"What do you make of it, Ned?" asked Frank.

"Perhaps the Boy Scout is with the lost expedition," suggested the boy. "I don't see how he can be with Denton."

"And the lost expedition?"

"Aw, that came from the steamer!" Jimmie cut in.

"Of course they had a cabin boy," Frank

said, "and the cabin boy may be a Boy Scout! There's one with the expedition, anyway, and he knows that we've got to make haste if we catch up with him."

"This certainly gets my goat!" Dennis observed. "It seems to me that you can pick up Boy Scouts in any part of the world!"

"And why not?" demanded Jimmie. "There are hundreds of thousands of them, and they are doing all kinds of stunts! The boys who join the Scouts, too, are brave an' adventurous, an' those are the sort of kids you find out in the wide spaces of the world. Of course we'll find Boy Scouts wherever we go!"

"But up here almost to the North Pole!"

"Boy Scouts, I take it, can go where anyone else can!" insisted the boy. "And then some!"

"I'm going to study the official handbook when I get back," Dennis asserted. "Think of my not knowing the illustrated Myer wig-wag code!"

"Well, come on, you fellers!" Jimmie shouted, "here's a Boy Scout wants us to hurry, an' its me for a glide! Hear that celebration ahead? I'll gamble they're waitin' for me to make the oration of the day."

The "celebration" to which the little fellow referred sounded like a volley of shots. After walking a short distance the boys came to the

summit of a contorted mass of ice which lifted some twenty feet or more above the level of the channel.

"There surely is a celebration over yonder!" Frank cried out. "I see powder smoke, anyway."

"Let 'em shoot!" Dennis remarked. "As long as they are trying to kill each other they can't be looking for what we came here to get!"

The boys now passed along at a swift pace, the surface of the ice being smoother as they approached the west shore of the basin, from which Lady Franklin bay opened. As they drew closer, they saw that their approach had been observed by a party of men gathered on the ice not far from the mouth of the bay, which, except at the very mouth, looked like one solid mass of ice.

There is a river which drains a lake in the interior of Grinnell land, and which flows northeast into Lady Franklin bay. This river, although frozen most of the time, pours quite a quantity of water into the bay, and so on into the Arctic ocean.

In June when the ice begins to break, and green things begin to show on the earth, when even flowers show their pretty faces above the half-frozen soil, this river sometimes breaks from its chain of ice and sends a great mass

of crystal cakes and floes and miniature bergs down to the bay. The bay at this time seemed to be packed with the icy contributions of this nameless river.

After walking a couple of hours the boys were close enough to the other party to "count noses." There were seven men in the group, and all appeared to be well armed.

"That is the lost expedition!" Dennis cried. "There are the dogs and sledges off to the north! Now the question that is bothering me is this:

"How the Old Scratch did they ever make such quick progress over the glaciers of Greenland? Why, they ought to be lost in the mountains, a hundred miles south and east of here!"

"There are loose dogs!" shouted Frank.

"My dogs, I'll bet a cookie!" Dennis answered. "My dogs, for sure! They came up this way when they ran off, you recall?"

"And that proves," Ned observed, "that this lost expedition took to the channel just after passing to the north of us. If they had waited until they reached this point before taking to the ice, the dogs wouldn't have scented and followed them."

"I begin to see through the thing," Dennis confessed. "They are here in advance of us

because they took to the ice when it was smoother, and because they had dogs while we were on foot! That's easy!"

"And because they had a start!" Ned laughed.

"Are you going right up to them?" asked Frank. "Won't they shoot, or something if we get too close?"

"We've got to take chances," was the reply the leader made. "It appears to me, though," he went on, "that they will have enough to do if they keep Denton from picking them off. There's surely some shooting going on to the west of them! See the puffs of smoke?"

"I don't see what Denton is up to—if that is Denton!" Frank wondered. "What's he shooting for?"

"Because," Ned answered, "he hasn't had time to find the cairn, and he wants to drive the visitors away until he does find it."

"What good will what he finds there, do him?" asked Frank.

"Preserve his worthless life! The nation interested would give a lot to keep those documents out of the hands of Uncle Sam."

"Don't touch on the mystery!" laughed Jimmie. "Ned's going to keep the story to the last! Suppose we stop right here an' eat? I forgot to eat my pie, you hurried me away so!"

Jimmie's "pie" consisted of two thick slices

of bread—not too light, for Frank had had bad luck with that "batch"—and a monster slice of venison. "On the side" were beet pickles and raw onion!

In response to the suggestion, the appetites of all the lads came to mind at once, and so a lamp was lighted and coffee made ready.

"Speakin' of pie," Jimmie suggested, with his mouth full of venison, "do you mind the pie at the old Bowery hotel, up near Sixth street? That was pie! I don't know what there was in it, but it was pie. You could buy a little one—hot—for six cents! Now, in those days—"

The boy stopped and sat staring with open mouth and amazed eyes. A hand had reached over his shoulder and taken his "pie." It was a mittened hand, but the mitten was worn and dirty, and not at all like the neat mittens worn by the boys.

In a second Jimmie turned so as to look to the rear, and then his eyes opened wider than ever, if that were possible!

"Well, say!" the boys heard him exclaim. "I like the nerve of you! Perhaps you'd like coffee and a napkin?"

The boys who had all been facing the mouth of Lady Franklin bay, and had been busy with their sandwiches at that, turned at the sound of Jimmie's voice and began asking questions.

"Who you talking to?" demanded Frank. "If you mean me, I'll take the napkin, all right."

"He's seeing ghosts!" Dennis roared. "He's offering a napkin to the Spirit of the North Pole!"

"What seems to be the symptons, little man?" Ned asked, pretending to be very much alarmed.

Jimmie answered none of the questions. Instead, he arose from the block of ice upon which he had been seated and dashed around the angle of an elevation hardly a yard away. In grinding together, the ice had lifted and formed a compact, vertical ridge some four feet in height.

"Catch him!" roared Frank. "He's going to drown himself!"

In a second the little fellow came back around the angle, holding by the hair of the head a boy of his own size, with a tow-colored head and light blue eyes. The prisoner did not seem to be at all frightened He was munching the huge sandwich he had snatched out of Jimmie's hand!

"Don't you dare to go fishing again!" Frank commanded. "You stay in sight of your friends, or you'll be having all the Boy Scouts in the world up here."

Jimmie shook the prisoner lightly, as if trying

to get the sandwich away from him, but there was an amused twinkle in his eyes.

"Where did you come from?" he demanded, while the others gathered in a group about the two.

"You know!" replied the captive, chewing industriously, and giving the full salute of the Boy Scouts. "You got me card!"

"What Patrol?" asked Ned.

"Turtle, Boston."

"And you've just come out of your shell?" laughed Frank. "Did you walk all the way up here?"

The other pointed to the group on the ice in front of the mouth of the bay and kept on eating.

"S-a-a-y!" Jimmie went on, pulling at the other's sleeve, "don't you ever Fletcherize your provisions? You want to chew each bite thirty-two times! It is scandalous, the way you hog that hand-out!"

"Did you leave that paper?" asked Ned, anxious to get to the bottom of the matter. "Did you come from the party over there?"

"Do I get any coffee?" asked the captive. "My name's Sid Rose, an' I'm the lad that put tic in Arctic. Do I get it?"

"You'll get no tick out of our Arctic!" grinned Jimmie, "unless you tell us what those chaps are up here after!"

"They're after your goat!" was the answer.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MAN FROM THE FOG

The boys questioned Sid Rose, the new addition to their party, for a few minutes, only to learn that he had signed on the steamer *Vixen* as cabin boy, that the steamer had become crippled in the ice, and that the officers and three members of the crew had started northward, using such dogs as they could secure. He did not know what they were going north for, but had heard many threats made against the crew of the *Arctic*, known to them to be farther up toward the open sea.

The steamer had waited a day for the return of Martin, who, with a campanion, had been sent out in a boat to communicate with a spy on board the motor boat, but, as the two did not return, they had been obliged to go away and leave them to their fate.

The party, called "the lost expedition" by the Esquimaux, had traveled along the shore of Grinnell land for a time, but had crossed the channel after meeting with loose ice, and sought better traveling along the coast of Greenland. They had seen Esquimaux near Cape Forbes, and had learned from them that the shore ice

was still firm to the north, so that had been only a short distance ahead of Ned and his party on the way to Lady Franklin bay.

The *Vixen* party, he said, had just reached the mouth of the bay when shots were fired at them. Shortly after this the boy had dropped down behind a hummock of ice and, without being missed, had awaited the arrival of the Boy Scout party. All through the chase, he said, the *Arctic* expedition had been referred to as "The Baby Bunch ahead."

"I thought the baby bunch good enough for me," he said, and so came back to give you the benefit of polite society!"

"Did you ever hear anything like his nerve?" asked Jimmie.

In summer the east coast of Grinnell land presents a most remarkable appearance. There is a range of mountains which comes almost down to the water's edge. These are covered with hard ice in the winter, but during June, July, and August the ice rots and breaks away, with the result that great streams of water come pouring down to the coast.

When the water, ice cold, gains the hummock ice in the channel its onward course is checked as it beats against the ice ridges which have formed on the channel. The result is that it freezes during the colder days and forms a com-

paratively hard footway, from one to three hundred yards wide.

A person, therefore, walking along the shore ice would find himself between two walls—the mountainous wall of the main land and the icy wall erected by the waters off the mountains. In most places this latter wall is fifty feet in height, though it rises to double that height at times. There are frequent bays opening from the coast, and the ice in these is harder and more secure for traveling than that in the open channel.

Ned and his friends had crossed the basin in a northwesterly direction, and so had not come to this strange pathway until they reached the vicinity of Lady Franklin bay. They were close to the ice hummocks which guarded it on the east when Rose made his appearance.

"The lost expedition people, of course, know that we are here," Ned said, as he gazed over the ice to the group beyond.

"You needn't guess again!"

This from Rose, who was suggesting to Jimmie that he open his provision bag once more!

"And they're gettin' ready to shoot, too," Rose added, as Jimmie passed out another great sandwich and poured a third cup of coffee.

"Then how are we goin' to get to the land?"

demanded Jimmie. "We can't stay here, for the ice is gettin' more rotten every minute."

As the lad spoke the sunshine darkened and a faint gust of wind came out of the north.

"I guess Dame Nature is providing a way!" Ned said, pointing to the north. "She has aided us before!"

In five minutes a fog settled down over the landscape. The previous day had been remarkably clear, but this visitation seemed determined to make amends for any lack of attention heretofore shown by the Fog King.

"Talk about the Banks of New Foundland!" Dennis cried. "This has the Banks looking like a clover field under an August sun! We'll be lucky, now, if we don't have a storm of rain and hail!"

"That would open the water down to where the *Arctic* lies," Frank shouted, excitedly. "Would the boys have sense enough to come up here if it did?"

"Nix on that!" Jimmie answered. "No boats ever get up here."

"When you get back home," Frank advised, "read 'The Open Polar Sea,' by Dr. Hayes, and you'll find that whalers and steam vessels can mount to the polar coast itself in the three summer months."

"Then why didn't we bring the *Arctic* up?" asked the boy.

"Ask Ned!" Frank grinned.

"Because it is too early in the season," Ned said. "Going back, we must fight our way through the eddies and whirl pools of Smith sound, and we want the month of July for that. Later, we might have forced our way here in the motor boat."

"Well, what next?" asked Jimmie. "This tramp is eatin' all my grub, an' I'm gettin' anxious to get back to the *Arctic*."

"We'll have to climb this barrier of ice," Ned returned, "and get on the shore ice. Then we'll find a place where we can camp and await developments. You see, I don't know exactly where this cairn is."

It was laborious work clambering over the piled-up hummocks, but the task was completed at last, and the boys huddled down behind a wing of ice which jutted out from the north and south wall of the mountain. There they were out of the wind, and also in a position where their presence was not likely to be discovered by their enemies if the fog should clear away suddenly.

The camp, if so rude a resting place may be so termed, was within two hundred yards of the point of the south cape guarding Lady Frank-

in bay. The *Vixen* people were not far away from this point when last seen, but farther out in the basin. The whereabouts of Denton was not known. From the first Ned believed that it was Denton who had done the shooting from the shore.

"Now get into your sleeping bags and keep warm," Ned advised, "and I'll go and bring in the cairn. Make some coffee if you want to. It will help to keep you comfortable, and the light of the cooking lamp can never be seen through this fog."

"Yes," Jimmie cut in, "and don't go to shootin' if you see bears! We don't want those geeks to know we are on shore."

"I'll leave you here to see that everything is kept straight," Ned said, turning to the little fellow."

"Who? Me? I'm goin' with you!"

"I want Dennis to go this trip," Ned replied. "He is more used to this wandering in the fog."

"I'll tag on behind!" warned Jimmie.

"We'll tie him up," declared Frank.

Jimmie's eyes danced, but he said no more. When Ned and Dennis disappeared under the white veil of the fog he threw himself on his bag and sat listening intently for a long time.

Then he arose and slipped an automatic and a searchlight into his pockets.

"What's up now?" asked Frank.

"I'm gettin' ready for an emergency," was the reply.

"You're not thinking of following Ned?" asked the other. "You never could find him in this fog. You might miss him if only twenty feet away! If you don't sit down I'll sit on top of you!"

But in ten minutes Jimmie was gone! He had made his threat of "tagging on behind" good!

Frank, thus left alone with Rose, called softly through the fog, but received no reply. After waiting a short time, he flashed his electric light over the wing of ice to the north, hoping that the boy would see the reflection and return. He was certain that Jimmie could not follow the boys through the darkness, and equally certain that he would come to some harm. He was not a little annoyed at the conduct of his chum, though he could not restrain a smile as he thought of the loyalty of the little fellow. An hour or more passed, and then a report like that of a canon came from the direction of the bay.

"That's the ice going out!" Rose asserted.

"It was cracking in the bay when I left the *Vixen* bunch."

"I'd like to see it go!" Frank admitted.

"If the fog would only lift, we might see it from the point, just above here, though we'd have to climb some."

"Who cares for a little footwork?" demanded Frank. "If we can see Lady Franklin bay from that point, I'm willing to climb!"

"We can't see anything if the fog holds," insisted the other.

"Suppose we go and see if there is a chance of its lifting," Frank proposed. "We may be able to see better from the cape anyway."

Frank darted away, but Rose called softly to him to return.

"The shots fired at the lost expedition people came from this way," he said, "and this man Denton I've heard you talking about may be up on the cliff at the point. We'd better go slowly."

The lads passed on to the north in the direction of the cape beyond which lay the icy waters of Lady Franklin bay. No sooner were they out of sight in the fog than a figure moved stealthily toward the outfit they had left. It was the figure of a bent and stooping man. A long beard trailed over his chest, and his long hair lapped over the collar of the ragged fur

jacket he wore. His face was deathly white, his eyes wild and glaring.

Stopping only for a second to listen to the retreating footsteps of the boys, he fell flat on his stomach and nosed into one of the provision packs brought thither by the Boy Scouts. The pack was open directly, the strings being torn apart frantically, and the intruder was feeding on bread and meat like one long famished.

After a time he ceased eating and turned his bloodshot eyes toward the oil cooking lamp, above which the coffee pot was still resting. Listening again, and hearing no sounds indicative of the return of the boys, he applied a match to the wick and sat back, still eating, waiting for the coffee to heat.

There was something in the attitude of the man, as he sat there devouring the stolen provisions, which classed him with the wild animal life of the Arctic regions! His fingers, revealed by the removal of his worn mittens, were long and thin, and carried long nails, clawlike and foul. His eyes wandered furtively about, like the eyes of a hunted beast.

While he ate, the coffee came to a boil, and, pouring a cup, he dipped his bread into it and ate it, boiling hot as it was. A long sigh of

satisfaction passed his shrunken lips as he quaffed the beverage.

His comfort, however, was disturbed, directly, by the fall of footsteps on the ice. Hastily replacing the pack and the coffee cup in their original positions, as nearly as he could remember, he dropped back into the fog and waited and listened.

In a moment a cheerful whistle was heard, and then Jimmie came into the faint circle of light created by the blazing wick, which the hungry intruder had failed to extinguish. The boy looked about for Frank and Rose, and his eyes caught sight of the broken pack.

"Hello!" he cried. "I guess them ginks had another supper!"

The intruder saw that the boy was alone. He was still hungry, he still longed for one more cup of the hot coffee! He drew an automatic revolver from a ragged pocket in his fur jacket and advanced. When the boy, warned by his stumbling steps, looked up he found himself regarding the grim muzzle of the weapon! He sat down without a word.

"If you move," the visitor said in a cracked voice, "I'll blow your brains out!"

"Then I won't move," Jimmie said, cheerfully. "I don't know where I can get another

batch of brains, and they're needed in this precinct."

"Where are your companions?" asked the other.

"Back there in the fog," was the reply. "I hear 'em behind you!"

The visitor did exactly what the boy had figured on his doing.

He turned to look furtively about. As he did so the gun was kicked from his hand. His fingers tingling from the kick, the fellow turned back to the boy to find himself confronted by two things—a revolver and a freckled nose that was making insulting remarks to him!

He sprang for the lost weapon, but Jimmie bunted against him and he fell weakly down by the lamp. Jimmie sat down and surveyed him with pity.

"You're lost up here?" he asked.

"Lost and starving!"

"Did you get all you wanted to eat and drink?"

The other shook his head and a fierce, hungry light came into his eyes, making them more brute-like than before.

"Then go to it!" the boy advised. "We'll get more somehow!"

The fellow's hands trembled so that he could not hold the cup and the pot at the same time—

he needed one hand to sustain the other—and Jimmie poured the coffee and handed it to him.

"What have you done with the other boys?" Jimmie asked then.

"There was no one here when I came. The other said they were going to the cape to look over the bay."

"Say!" the boy exclaimed. "You're Denton! What?"

The fierce eyes strained and the man sprang again for his gun!

CHAPTER XIX

ADRIFT ON BREAKING ICE

When Ned and Dennis came to the headland which Frank and Rose were soon to seek, they looked long over the fog-covered bay without being able to distinguish any feature of the landscape. In the distance they could hear the breaking and grinding of the ice.

"If I only knew whether the cairn I seek is on this side or the other," Ned said, "I might make some progress today, even in this smother."

"I don't believe the party which built the cairn," Dennis suggested, "ever got across the bay. I read a good many books on Arctic travel while on the *Reindeer*, and I never found one party which got across Lady Franklin bay.

"But many companies have gone farther north," suggested Ned.

"Yes, but they invariably kept to shore ice, winding around the long shores of the bay. That would take a long time, and hardly be worth while. After this time of the year, the ice in the basin and in the lower end of the bay is often so rotten that it will not hold even dog teams."

"I know," Ned answered, "that Dr. Hayes did not succeed in getting to North Cape."

"No;" Dennis agreed, "and yet he thought he came to the open Polar sea, which he did not."

"He wasn't very far from it," laughed Ned, "but a few miles count a lot when new lands are being surveyed. I believe that I could take the *Arctic* through to the Polar basin right now."

"Are you thinking of trying it?"

Ned hesitated a moment.

"The prospect is an alluring one," he said, "still I think I would better complete my business here and get back home. I expect a hard time in Smith sound as it is."

"Do you think the boys will bring the *Arctic* up here, if the ice breaks up?" asked Dennis. "That would be an easy way for us to get back, wouldn't it?"

"It might," was the reply, "and, again, the ice might drift in so we would be tied up for a long time."

The boys talked for some moments, standing there on the headland overlooking Lady Franklin bay. Somewhere within the reach of the eye, on clear days, lay the object of their search, but it seemed no nearer to Ned than on the day he sailed out of New York harbor!

Presently they turned to the west and

descended a long ice-and-snow covered incline which seemed to bring them almost to the level of the bay. By the time they gained smooth ground they were at least two miles from the place where they had set their little camp.

They had been more than an hour on the journey, and were tired, as the way had been rough in the extreme. They halted where a little cape shot out from the shore to look over the ice, for the fog was now clearing and the sun could be seen at intervals.

"If we could get a good view of the coast from the ice," Ned suggested, "we might be able to discover the cairn. There is a very tall timber set close to it—a timber taken from the ship and set deep in the ice so as to mark the spot."

"That ice looks pretty good to me," Dennis argued, pointing to the bay. "I'm going out to test it."

"It is probably safe close to the shore," Ned suggested, "but I'm afraid it is rotten farther out. Anyway, we'll go as far as we can."

The ice of the bay was smooth and hard for perhaps three hundred yards or more, then it became manifestly unsafe. The sun was now in view most of the time, and the southern shore was in sight, with a field glass, for a number of miles.

"There's something sticking up over there to

the west!" cried Dennis, pointing the glass in that direction.

"It surely looks like a hewn timber!" Ned said, taking the glass.

The boy looked long and anxiously at the object to which his attention had been called, Dennis watching him eagerly.

"That is just what it is, a hewn timber!" Ned exclaimed, after a time, "and the shape of the shore there is not unlike that given in the description of the place."

He passed the glass to Dennis, who, in turn, studied the shore in the vicinity of the signal post.

"Did you see the people moving around there?" asked the boy.

"I saw no one!" Ned exclaimed, excitedly.

"I reckon the lost expedition has landed," Dennis observed, handing the glass back to Ned. "They seem to have beaten us to it!"

"I don't see any one," Ned said.

"But they are there, seven or eight of them!"

"Not at this moment!"

"Well, watch the corner of that hummock to the west. They were in the vicinity of that when I saw them."

Ned did as requested and soon laid down his glass with a discouraged sigh. It seemed to him that he had, for once, lost out!

"What are they doing now?" asked Dennis.

"Getting out picks and building fires!"

Dennis looked Ned fairly in the face and smiled.

"Well?" he asked.

"We've got to get up there!"

Ned's eyes flashed as he spoke, and the muscles around his mouth hardened as his jaws closed with a snap.

"That's what I thought!"

"I hope they haven't seen us here," Ned observed, "for we can go a lot faster on the ice than on the shore."

"They will see us before we get to them."

Ned turned his face to the cliffs which backed the shore line.

"No use!" he commented. "They can empty the cairn and get off over the bay before we can reach the spot by way of the cliffs. We've just got to stick to the ice!"

Dennis agreed to this, and the boys hastened forward, not at all decided as to what course they should pursue when they should come in view of those at work on the cairn.

"They have discovered the plant, all right," Ned conceded, as they walked along. "They have a roaring fire there, and they must, of course, be burning wood, so they are demolish-

ing the old hull which grounded on the other side of that point."

"And what became of the crew?" asked Dennis.

"Only one man returned to tell of the fate of the other's."

"And he brought news of the cairn, of course?"

"Yes."

"Wonder he wouldn't have brought the valuable things with him," mused Dennis. "He might have saved a lot of trouble."

"The papers are too precious to be carried over rotten ice floes by a half-starved man who is not certain of getting anywhere with them."

"And he knew that! Well, he was a wise man! I wouldn't like to take a chance on finding my way back to civilization on foot!"

"He just lived to get through," Ned went on, as they walked swiftly over the ice. "He did not live half an hour after telling his story. That is why so little is known of the location of the cairn."

"He said he was the only survivor?"

"That was inferred because he came out alone and never referred to companionship of any kind."

"Then there may be other survivors of the wreck here?"

"Doubtful! They would have died from cold and hunger long ago."

"You never can tell!" was Dennis' dubious comment. "You see how I got through a tough three months!"

"And there were people all around you, and you never knew!" smiled Ned. "It was a remarkable situation."

"It wasn't an agreeable one!" replied Dennis.

The boys did not approach the shore as they walked west toward the point where the people they saw were, and where the cairn was believed to be. Instead, they kept well out on the bay, aiming to get as far west toward the point where the people they saw were, and where the cairn was believed to be. Instead, they kept well out on the bay, aiming to get as far west as the others were and then turn south. They believed that they would stand a better chance of coming upon the others unseen by adopting this course, although it was somewhat longer.

"We are getting along nicely!" Ned declared, after they had walked a mile or more. "If nothing happens, we'll come pretty close to them before they see us."

Then something happened!

There was a succession of sharp reports from the ice under their feet, and then they felt themselves afloat!

Dennis sprang toward a widening channel to the south, but Ned drew him back and held him for a moment.

"Don't be foolish!" Dennis shouted, trying to pull away. "That open channel will be half a mile wide in no time, and it will be between us and the south shore."

"We can't jump it!" Ned insisted. "You would have landed in the bay if you had tried!"

"I guess you are right!" Dennis admitted. "It made me crazy to think of being marooned on an ice floe up here."

"It may strike hard ice farther down," Ned said, encouragingly, "and then we can work over to the south shore."

"And in the meantime," complained Dennis, "we are drifting out to the bay, and the lost expedition people are digging in the cairn!"

"But it can't be helped!" was all Ned said, though he was blue and discouraged over the happening.

The ice upon which the boys stood had now broken off from the main section, and was floating eastward in an ever-widening channel.

This is what had happened:

The valley of the river running in at the west end of the bay had been filling for days with water poured down from the hills and elevations of the interior. For a time the ice on the river

had withstood the burden of the fast-rising water, but now it had broken, and the torrent, sweeping down to the bay, had broken the ice in its path, creating a long crack from the mouth of the stream to the basin, and far out beyond the line of the headlands.

The waters of the river rushed through this channel with great force, carrying with it the ice brought down from above, for a time, but eventually freeing itself by pressing the masses in the bay farther apart and lodging its burdens on the ice fields on either side. Just how far the current would carry the boys out into the basin they had no idea.

"I'm afraid this ends all hope of getting to the cairn!" Dennis grumbled, as the ice swept along, breaking into sections as it struck against harder projections.

"No game is ever played out until the last hand is on the table!" Ned grinned. "We'll get out of this directly."

"We're likely to have company, anyway!" Dennis shouted, as two figures came sliding down an icy incline to the south.

The next moment Ned saw that Frank and Rose were trying to reach them. He called to them to keep off the ice, but they did not appear to hear what he said. He motioned to them to go west to the column of smoke which

was now lifting to the sky, but they kept on walking toward the bay.

"If they would only go to the cairn!" Ned groaned. "If they would only go to the cairn!"

But Frank and Rose only saw Ned and Dennis floating out to sea on a crumbling floe, and kept on toward the now unsafe ice of the bay!

CHAPTER XX

THE STORY OF THE LOST SUSAN

Jimmie merely dodged when the intruder sprang at him. The man was weak, and he stumbled and fell before his hand came within reach of his weapon. From the ground he looked appealingly up at the boy, his haggard eyes as pitiful as those of a fawn in a trap.

Jimmie secured the revolver and stood watching the man for a time. He decided to await the arrival of Ned before questioning him, for he was in a terrible condition, mentally as well as physically, and the boy did not care to put him through the "third degree" oftener than was absolutely necessary.

While this decision was forming in the mind of the boy he did not know that Ned and Dennis were drifting out to sea on a rotten floe, or that Frank and Rose were in danger because they were trying to get to Ned, or that the people of the lost expedition were at that moment digging into the cairn the Boy Scout expedition had come so far to find!

As time passed and none of the boys came, Jimmie began to feel that some accident had befallen them. The strange guest was now

seated by the oil lamp, gazing longingly at the coffee. Jimmie lifted the pot and took a tin cup into his hand.

"You're the boy for the chickory!" he said, as he poured out a full pint of the steaming beverage, put in plenty of sugar, and then drew a flat bottle from one of the packs.

The man eyed the preparations eagerly.

"This is brandy I'm puttin' into the coffee," the boy said. "You won't get any more, so don't figure on gettin' on a package an' startin' somethin' here!"

"Brandy!" gasped the other.

"All the way from Broadway!" grinned Jimmie.

The man gulped the stimulating drink down at a couple of swallows and passed the cup back to the boy. Then he dozed off for a few minutes, his eyelids drawn into tense lines, his mouth open, showing worn and broken teeth and angry sores on the tongue.

"I reckon he's had a hard tussle with the Frozen North!" Jimmie said, speaking half aloud.

The other opened his eyes instantly.

"How do you know that?" he shouted, his cracked voice rising shrilly above the sound of grinding ice.

"You look it!" was the reply.

"I was out of food!" the other said, simply.

There was not a doubt in the mind of the boy that he was sitting face to face with Denton, the man who had blown up the *Reindeer* and fled to escape the consequences of his crime. There was a look about the eyes of the object crouching by the lamp which told of a hunted existence.

"You wasn't out of ammunition!" Jimmie ventured.

"Ammunition?" repeated the other.

"Yes, ammunition! I heard you shootin' at the lost expedition folks when I came in from the basin."

"I'm the lost expedition!" the other said.

"You?" Jimmie exclaimed. "You belong to the lost expedition, do you? Are they all as hungry as you were?"

"There are no more," was the reply.

"No?" Jimmie queried, with a grin. "Why did you shoot? You couldn't lose by having someone come an' feed you, you know!"

"I didn't shoot!"

"Aw, your cargo's shifted!" Jimmie laughed. "You shot at the men out on the bay, not so very long ago!"

The man shook his head in a puzzled way.

"No," he said, "I didn't."

"Then who did?"

Again the strange visitor shook his head. Presently the stimulus of the brandy began to stir his faculties, and he lifted his head and stared about with a sense of never having seen that spot before. He eyed Jimmie suspiciously.

"It waked you up, did it?" asked the boy.

"Oh," answered the other. "You gave me something! I remember now. I was hungry."

Jimmie regarded his almost empty provision pack and laughed.

"You made a pretty good imitation of a hungry man!" he said.

"Why are you here alone?" asked the man. "Are you lost, too?"

"Not so you could notice it!" grinned the boy. "I have been here a long time!"

This with a long sigh and a facial spasm of self pity.

"Nearly a year," Jimmie said.

"Two years," was the reply. "Two long years!"

Jimmie eyed the man doubtfully.

"Say," he asked, "are you Denton?"

The hungry man's eyes flashed, flinched, and closed.

"No," he said, "I'm not Denton!"

The boy sprang to his feet with an exclamation of joy.

"Where is Denton?" he asked.

"Dead!"

"How long since?"

"More than a year. He left the company with me."

"The *Reindeer*, you mean?"

"I never heard of the craft you speak of."

The fellow's eyes were brightening and his muscles seemed to have acquired new life as he moved about.

"Did you help to plant the cairn here?" he asked.

"Oh, yes; that was two years and more ago!"

Jimmie sat down, helpless with astonishment, and stared into the face of the man before him. Why didn't Ned come? This wasn't Denton!

Here, undoubtedly, was a man who had helped to build the cairn which they were in search of! Here was a man who could point the way to the treasures they had come so far to find. Why didn't Ned come and learn all there was to learn of the man before he collapsed from utter weakness?

There was now no fog, and the ice was cracking and grinding noisily on the bay. The cold wind from the north had died away, and the

rays of the sun were actually penetrating the boy's clothing!

Jimmie did not again contradict his queer guest. He let him ramble on about days of frost and hunger until he fell into what seemed to be a light sleep. Like an animal with a full stomach, the man was digesting!

Finally the boy put the man's weapon into his pocket, hid the coffee and food, and wandered out to the cape which looked over the bay. As soon as he reached the elevation from which Frank and Rose had looked sometime before, the rattle of revolvers came from the west, so his eyes did not seek the bay to the east.

Had he looked in that direction, he would have seen Ned and Dennis standing on a cake of ice which was drifting out to the basin. Frank and Rose were not in sight from that point at that time.

"There's somethin' doin' up there!" the lad mused. "I wonder if Ned an' Dennis got up that far? There's a big smoke, though I don't see how anyone managed to get wood enough for a fire out here!"

Had he carried his field glass with him on his visit to the cape, he would have seen half a dozen men working industriously with picks and spades at a heap of rocks not far from the shore

of the bay, and by the cairn a tall, square timber pointed to the sky!

"If that ain't Ned up there," the boy mused, "it is the lost expedition rough necks! Whoever it is has built a fire, and no one would build a fire unless there was something worth waitin' there for!"

The boy studied the situation over and over again. He could not understand about the shooting. If Ned was at the fire, where were Frank and Rose?

Even while the boy stood on the point, a wind came up out of the north and flakes of snow began falling. It seemed to him that he ought to go on to the point where the fire was, and yet he did not like to leave his strange visitor alone for a long space of time.

Reluctantly he went back to the camp, where he found the hungry guest sitting by the cooking lamp, which was again alight. The man was shivering with the cold, although Jimmie felt quite warm with his jacket unbottoned in front.

"Not much warmth in that," Jimmie said.

"It looks warm," was the shivering reply.

"Get into one of the sleeping bags," advised the boy, "and I'll make you some more hot coffee. It is the reaction that's got you now."

The stranger crawled into one of the bags and

closed his eyes for a moment. Then he sat up, staring.

"I heard shooting!" he cried. "Where was it?"

"Away up at the next shore point west," the boy answered.

"Where the timber is planted?"

There was a world of eagerness in the man's voice and manner.

"I don't know what there is planted up there," Jimmie added. "The men who came in from the basin ahead of us must have found something there, though, for they have built a fire and are fighting with some one for the position."

The visitor threw himself back and laughed—a harsh, fiendish laugh of triumph which set Jimmie's nerves to tingling.

"Ho! Ho! Ho! Go and see if they are digging there!" shouted the guest. "Run out and see if they are digging there! That will be the best joke of all—if they are digging there!"

"Why should they dig there?" demanded the boy.

"Why the timber, the cairn!" laughed the other. "The timber and the cairn are on the next shore point!"

Jimmie bent over the man tremblingly. He was dropping into a doze again, and the boy shook him gently.

"Look here," he said, it is time for another dose of brandy! You forgot that, didn't you?"

The gleam came back to the man's eyes, and he sat up in the sleeping bag, his eyes fixed on Jimmie as he brought out the flat bottle. But when he reached a shaking hand out for the drink, the boy withdrew it out of his reach.

"What was it you said your name was?" he asked.

"Murphy! Michael Murphy! I sailed with the good ship *Susan* for Lady Franklin bay, with a suspicious man and a secret on board, and there we went to smash. Denton and I alone escaped. Denton is dead! One man went away south on the ice, but I guess he is dead too. He never came back with what he went for—food and drink!"

Jimmie handed him the drink and sat down by his side. Murphy consumed the liquid in a second, almost, and directly his eyes opened wider and he began to talk about the cairn and the treasures it held.

Jimmie listened until he had the whole story of the wreck of the ill-fated *Susan*, of the making of the cairn, and of the death of those who had come on the *Susan*. There had been a Denton in that party, too, and he had been caught at cannibalism and driven from the camp,

which is why Murphy had become excited at mention of the name.

"And the cairn?" asked Jimmie, as the man drowsed off again.

"West," began Murphy, "west by west—south by south—be careful of the glacier—it moves a foot a year!"

"But what about the cairn?" pleaded the boy, shaking the cup before Murphy's eyes.

"It is there—west by west—south by south—"

CHAPTER XXI

JIMMIE'S BRIGHT IDEA

Ned and Dennis, adrift on the crumbling ice cake welcomed the spurt of snow, for it came from the north, and with it came a gust of wind which rattled the floes together and pushed them toward the south shore of the bay. The wind blew fitfully at first, but directly it settled down into a long, steady blow which promised to continue for hours.

"Now we'll get to shore!" Dennis cried. "It takes a long time for the breeze to get the ice started, but before long we'll land at the headland, where we left the boys."

"We can, perhaps, assist the wind a little," Ned suggested, opening his jacket and, standing with his back to the wind, holding the garment out like a sail.

"That does appear to help some!" Dennis commented, and directly he was following Ned's example and the ice was drifting more rapidly toward the south shore.

"If the ice this old catamaran bumps up against is solid," Dennis went on, "and we don't freeze to death doing this sail act, we'll soon be ready to hike up to that cairn and see

what the lost expedition persons are doing!"

The snow was now coming in great sheets, so that the boys were unable to see more than a few feet from their faces, and with it came little pellets of hail. For a time it appeared to the lads that the situation was growing worse instead of better.

Presently the ice floe upon which they were riding collided with a mass at the south and stopped, with a grinding noise which reminded Ned of the grinding of air brakes! Whether the ice raft had struck ice which would sustain their weight the lads had no means of knowing.

"If this blizzard would let up for just a second!" Dennis grumbled, "we could see what we were doing."

"We've got to be doing something right quick," Ned commented, "for the ice is breaking under my feet. The pressure to the north seems to be crinkling it up!"

"Come on, then!" Dennis advised. "Suppose we take a run-and-jump for the shore? We'll do worse if we stay here!"

The boy was about to put his idea into instant execution, but Ned checked him with a hand.

"We may as well feel our way along," the latter said.

The snow seemed to fill the air, so heavy was the fall, and Ned took out his searchlight in

an effort to see where he was walking. As he did so a shout came from the south.

"Hello! That you, Ned?"

"Frank?" Ned called back.

"Frank," came back the answer, "and in trouble!"

"You haven't got anything on us!" Dennis called back.

"Are you on the ice?" asked Ned, in a moment.

"I'm mostly walking on the water," was the reply, "but I guess there is a sheet of ice somewhere down under the water!"

"Make your way over here," Ned directed. "Our ice holds."

"Hold your light, then," Frank requested. "I can see that!"

Ned heard Frank and Rose splashing through water, heard the ice crack under their weight, and then came a heavy splash.

Ned called out again, but for a time there was no answer. The snow seemed to form a fantastic wall between the boys. Then Frank was heard calling out to Rose.

"Come on in!" he said. "The water's fine!"

"The water rat can't be drowning!" Ned chuckled. "What have you come across, Frank?" he added.

"Shore, I guess!" Frank blubbered back.

"We're all in a blooming bay, with rocks sticking out like teeth! You'll have to swim, I take it. Come this way!"

"I was taught never to take a cold bath just before eating!" Dennis declared, and Ned grinned at the sense of humor which could make fun of a situation like that.

"Talk about snow!" Frank called. "Dive and it will carry you to the shore. It is thick enough to build a skyscraper on!"

Ned and Dennis made their way cautiously along, and finally succeeded in getting to the shore without falling into the water, but Frank and Rose were drenched to the skin.

"Now, which way?" asked Frank, shivering. "I'm a lost expedition myself."

"Follow the wind," Dennis advised, "and we'll come to the headland. We were about opposite it, headed for New York harbor, when the snow came along and pulled down the blinds."

"That's good advice, too," Ned declared, and the four boys struck out over a hummock-filled plain which soon ended in a steep ascent.

"Here's your headland!" Frank chattered. "Just wait until I get these wet duds off and crawl into a sleeping bag! This is colder than charity at a police station!"

"We can't climb any farther!" called Den-

nis, from in front. "This headland has a high forehead here—like a cow!"

"That is getting foolish in the head," Frank cut in. "What would you give to be as wet as I am, sonny?" he added.

After a short consultation Ned and Dennis turned to the west while Frank and Rose faced the east, the idea being to keep in touch with each other and call out when a clear way was discovered. Ned and his companion had proceeded only a short distance when a long, shivering moan came to their ears out of the storm.

"Did you hear it?" asked Dennis. "I'm getting leary of being an Arctic hero! If that is the Spirit of the North, we're goners! No one ever heard it and lived long!"

Ned moved slowly along, his electric light on the blowing snow, looking for some explanation of the sound. Then he came to a figure huddled against the headland they were circling. The figure was that of a man, dressed in a worn fur coat and cap, with ragged mittens lying on the snow by his side, revealing long, wasted, claw-like fingers with broken nails.

A white beard fell over the man's breast, and his matted hair dropped below the collar of his

jacket. The man was writhing about in the snow, moaning and muttering to himself.

Ned bent over and listened.

"That would be the best joke of all—if they are digging at the old cairn!"

The voice failed, and the man lay still.

"Seems we've found another party who needs our gentle care!" Dennis grumbled, as Ned lifted the man to a sitting position. "What can we do with him?"

"Take him into camp, if we can find the camp!" replied Ned.

While the boys stood there, wondering if the man was quite dead, a light showed a few paces to the west, and a voice called:

"Hello! Hello, the light!"

"That's Jimmie," declared Dennis.

"Hello, Freckles!" called Ned. "Come on out and pilot us to camp."

In a moment the little fellow came running up.

"Huh!" he said. "I thought you were lost!"

"So we were," Dennis put in. "Do you know where you are?"

Jimmie did not answer, for his eyes had caught sight of the figure in the snow. He stooped over and tried to lift the man to his feet.

"This is my boarder!" he declared. "Help me carry him back to the camp! I went away to

look for you, and he ran off! His carburetter is on the pork!"

"Where did you find him?' asked Dennis.

"He just blew in," was the short reply.

"How far is it to camp?" asked Ned.

"About a block. "Say, I believe this man is dead!" the little fellow continued, laying the man's arm down by his side.

Ned and Dennis lifted the unfortunate and directed the boy to lead the way to the camp. When the place was reached, Ned found that Jimmie had moved the sleeping bags, the provision packs, and the cooking lamp into an ice cavern a few yards from the old resting place.

"We'll be out of the wind and snow here, anyway," the little fellow said. "I thought sure I'd have to make my way back alone!"

"Tell me about this man," Ned said, as he filled the coffee pot with small chunks of ice, preparatory to making more coffee water. "Who is he?"

"Michael Murphy, of the good ship *Susan*," answered Jimmie.

"The *Susan!*" repeated Ned, his astonishment showing in his face.

"And the *Susan* went to smash on the next shore point west, and the officers and seamen built the cairn and died, all except one who went to the south, and this man and another—one

Denton, who was caught cannibalizing and driven from the camp."

"Then he ought to know all about the cairn!" Ned almost shouted. "He ought to be able to point the way to it!"

"He's off his rinktum!" Jimmie answered, gravely.

"Insane, eh?"

"Ain't that what I said?"

"Get out the brandy!" Ned ordered. "We may be able to bring him out of this."

"I've tried that!" Jimmie admitted. "I've given him hot coffee with brandy in it!"

"How many times?" asked Ned.

"Only twice."

Dennis dropped back and laughed.

"You're good!" he cried, poking a finger at Jimmie. "You've been giving him hot brandy on an empty stomach, and you've got him soused!"

"Gee! I never thought of that!" Jimmie said.

Murphy now began muttering to himself again, and Ned sat down at his side while Frank and Rose removed their wet clothing and crept into fur sleeping bags, which they declared to be the coziest, warmest, nests they had ever

come across! The unconscious man's talk gradually became louder and more coherent after a time, and Ned bent closer so as not to miss a single word.

"Hope he will talk about the cairn!" Jimmie said to Dennis.

"Fat lot of good that'll do!" the latter replied, "with an army of men up there digging the cairn up!"

The little fellow sat gazing at Dennis for a moment without replying. He was trying to recall what Murphy had said regarding the digging up of that cairn.

"He," with a motion toward the man, "said it would be a joke if they began digging there," he said, then.

Ned turned about and asked, eagerly:

"What else did he say?"

"Nothin'—only some talk about the points of the compass. Say," the little fellow's eyes shone like stars, "do you know what I think?"

"Yes," Ned laughed, "I do know what you are thinking about! You are thinking that this man moved the things hidden in the cairn, and that the men who are digging up there now will find only an empty hole to reward them for their work."

"That's it!" roared the boy. "Now what?"

"If you are right," Ned suggested, "everything depends on whether we can keep this man alive until he can point out the new location!"

"It is the best of all jokes to have them dig there!" Murphy muttered.

CHAPTER XXII

THE SECRET OF THE CAIRN

The wind blew itself out during the night—which was no night at all, for the sun was always shining when the snow gave it a chance to show its face to the white world below. Ned did not sleep much, his time being spent sitting by the side of the new addition to the party.

The four had started out with four sleeping bags, and now there were six in the party, so Jimmie and Rose, being the slender ones, shared the largest "bedroom," as Jimmie called it, and Murphy slept and tumbled about in the bag Ned would have occupied had he considered it advisable to sleep at all. The boy was too nervous over the rescued man's condition to leave his side for a moment.

The night was not very cold, at least twenty above zero, and the boys were well sheltered from the wind and snow, so they awoke in the morning much refreshed. Jimmie was the first one out.

"What has he been saying?" the little fellow asked.

"I'm not worrying any more about the lost

expedition people getting to the timber and the cairn first!" Ned answered.

"So you know?"

"I think I can find the material which was buried in the cairn by the captain of the *Susan*," replied Ned, "but, of course, I'm not positive of it. This man Murphy has talked a lot of nonsense during the night."

"Perhaps I gave him too much bee juice!" winked Jimmie.

"You made him stupid for a time, and flighty for a time," Ned admitted, "but I think you saved his life!"

"Well, "Jimmie grinned, "I've got a hunch that the Bowery is weeping for me, so suppose we go an' get the truck an' be on our way?"

"I'm afraid it won't be so easy as that!" Ned went on. "When those people up at the cairn discover that they have been tricked, they may naturally wait around a bit to see what we do. They may even have the kind intention of permitting us to find what they want, and then taking it away from us! The battle, I fear, is not yet over, me son!"

"I'll go an' see what they're up to," the little fellow said, and darted away, only to return in ten minutes with his eyes almost as prominent as his freckled nose.

"Wake up the kids!" he shouted. "Get a

move on, all of you! The lost expedition is lost now f'r good, I take it! They're tryin' to cross to the other side of the bay, over the thin ice on that open channel, an' they'll make the army that chased Moses into the Red sea look like a hillside Sunday school revel in a minute!"

Having given this warning, Jimmie darted away again. When Ned and the others reached the headland, half a dozen or more men were struggling in the chilling waters of Lady Franklin bay!

The ice broke under their hands as fast as they clambered upon it—or tried to—and they were chilled through and exhausted when the boys reached the headland. Rescue was impossible, for the ice was now in such shape that it was not safe to venture on the bay at all. Ned and his chums turned away their faces!

"The lost expedition!" Dennis said, soberly, when there were no more struggling figures in sight. "The lost expedition is lost indeed."

The boys were saddened by the tragedy, and yet the necessity for exertion at once presented itself to their minds, so they hastened to prepare breakfast and started out on the work of the day. Rose was left with Murphy, who was recovering fast, and the others clambered up to the cairn which the others had opened. Here another tragedy was revealed. Denton lay by the open-

ing, shot through the heart! Justice had overtaken his murderers!

"Our enemies are fading away," Ned mused, "but I wish they had not met with death! The way is clear for us, but at what a cost of life!"

"A bad lot!" commented Dennis. "They got theirs!"

"So it was Denton who was fightin' 'em away from the cairn!" Jimmie observed. "An' there was nothin' in it, either!"

Frank looked up to Ned with a puzzled expression on his face.

"Did Murphy tell you where he built the new cairn?" he asked.

"His words were sometimes incoherent," Ned answered, "but I think you will find something if you look in the ice cave to the west!"

And there the long-sought-for papers were found. Murphy, in his delirium, had thought of the papers constantly, and had taken them out of the cairn, with the intention of building a new one for them, but the time and his strength had proved insufficient, so he had hidden them in one of the many ice caves made by the water trickling down from above. Only that the documents were wrapped many times over in waterproof cloth, and tightly sealed, they would have been ruined.

"Now, that the journey is over," Dennis

said, when the boys were in their camp again, cooking extravagant quantities of birds which Frank had shot, "tell us about the important papers!"

"There is not much to tell," Ned laughed. "It is the story of a crazy diplomat, who sailed on the *Susan* to make the northwest passage."

Murphy lifted his head, the light of reason shining in his eyes, and beckoned to the boys to come closer.

"Crazy he was not!" he said. "He stole the papers from the State department at Washington, to sell them for a price to another government! It is said that the papers he stole reveal a series of secret treaties between the United States and other governments prejudicial to this government, which sought the proof in order that war might be declared."

Ned regarded the man curiously.

"Where did you learn so much?" he asked.

"The man told me before he died! He was sorry for what he had done, and begged any one who might survive to see that the papers were taken back to Washington. That is why I moved them when I saw a man headed this way. The man Denton came first. He seemed to know of the cairn. I presume his commander confided the story of his mission to him."

"But he didn't locate the cairn at first, and

that gave me time to do what I did, and to pour water over the rebuilt pile so that no one would suspect that it had been interfered with. Before he found it, it was frozen solid. Then the lost expedition came up, and the two fought over a worthless heap of stones."

"But why did the man who stole the papers take to the north?" asked the practical Jimmie. "He ought to have gone home in one of the warships of his own country!"

"And given the whole thing away!" grinned Frank. "If he was suspected, his taking the warship would have implicated his own nation!"

"Correct!" Ned replied. "He was suspected, and the whole secret service department was out after him. He took the only way that he could have taken to get out of the United States. He just disappeared.

"Long after he was gone, it was discovered, through a man who had provisioned the *Susan*, that such a man was on board. Then the ship was reported lost, and Lieutenant Reis was sent north in the *Reindeer* to look up the papers —sent by the government which wanted to buy them. He was reported lost with all on board, and the papers were considered safe—buried under the ice of the Polar regions.

"Then Sailor Green came back, and I believed that I could find the papers, either at Cape

Forbes or Lady Franklin bay. I was told by the government to go ahead, and here we are, a long way from the *Arctic* and the ice not hard enough to walk on!"

"I guess we'll have to stay here a spell!" grumbled Dennis. "I had an idea that I'd soon be out of this when I saw you."

"You didn't say a word about the *Vixen* chasing you," Rose cut in. "I guess you think the *Vixen* was no good."

"No good at all!" laughed Frank. "She was held together only by her paint, and went to pieces at the first pinch of ice!"

"There were a lot of foreigners on board," Rose continued, "and they had no boss. They fought over the management. Besides, they nearly walked me to death after she was abandoned. I'm sorry they met with such a fate, but I guess they wasn't of much use in the world."

"What are you going to do with the papers?" asked Murphy.

"Take them back to Washington."

"Unopened?"

"Certainly."

"And then?"

"They will be destroyed. The treaties were abrogated long ago."

"Then why——"

"Well," laughed Ned, "I guess this thieving nation only wants half a chance to kick up a row with Uncle Sam.

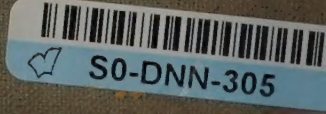
The *Arctic* had met with little trouble in making her way to Lady Franklin bay, and Jack and Jimmie were for going on to the open Polar sea, which was not far to the north, but Ned was anxious to get back with his papers, and so they turned south.

The journey home was without important incident, as the currents were carrying the ice out, and the temperature was not low. Positions were found in New York for Murphy, Dennis and Rose, and Sweeney was sent to his home in the west.

Ned's reward for his distinguished service was large, and all the boys were invited to share it, but none accepted. Jimmie insisted on Sailor Green taking a portion, but he was rewarded by the government, so declined.

It was middle July when the boys all met in the Black Bear Patrol clubroom again, and then Ned had a proposition to make to them. What his proposition was, and how it was handled will be told in the next volume of this series, entitled:

"THE BOY SCOUT CAMERA CLUB; or, the Confession of a Photograph."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